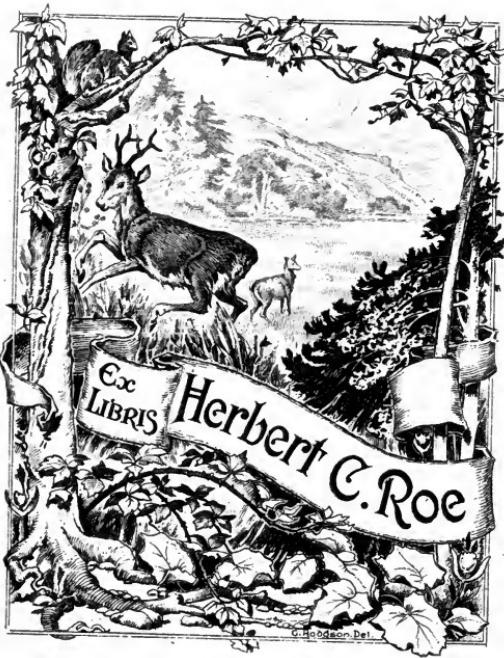


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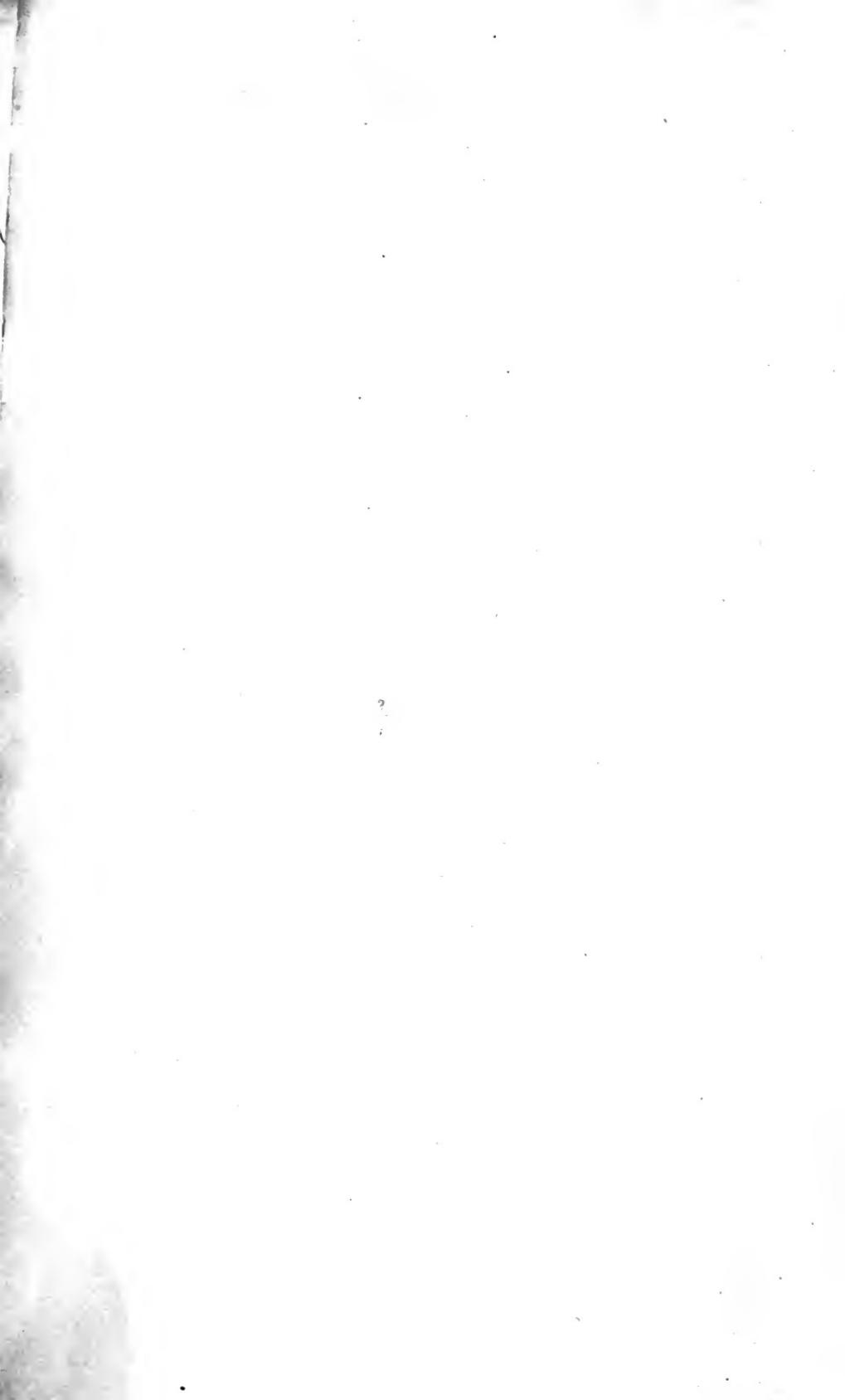
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RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

LIFE OF LORD BYRON,

FROM THE YEAR

1808 TO THE END OF 1814;

EXHIBITING

HIS EARLY CHARACTER AND OPINIONS, DETAILING THE PROGRESS OF HIS
LITERARY CAREER, AND INCLUDING VARIOUS UNPUBLISHED
PASSAGES OF HIS WORKS.

TAKEN FROM AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

IN THE POSSESSION OF THE AUTHOR.

BY THE LATE

R. C. DALLAS, Esq.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE SUPPRESSION
OF LORD BYRON'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE AUTHOR,
AND HIS LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER, LATELY
ANNOUNCED FOR PUBLICATION.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR CHARLES KNIGHT, PALL-MALL-EAST.

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Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-Court.

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PRELIMINARY STATEMENT.

CIRCUMSTANCES have rendered it necessary to account to the public for the appearance of the following Recollections in their present form. A work had been announced as preparing for publication, entitled "Private Correspondence of Lord Byron, including his Letters to his Mother, written from Portugal, Spain, Greece, and other parts of the Mediterranean, in the years 1809, 1810, and 1811, connected by Memorandums and Observations, forming a Memoir of his Life, from the year 1808 to 1814. By R. C. Dallas, Esq." Much expectation had been raised by this announcement, and considerable interest had been excited in the public

mind. The Vice-Chancellor, however, was applied to by Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson, for an injunction to restrain the intended publication, which was summarily granted as a matter of form; since which the Lord-Chancellor has been pleased to confirm the Vice-Chancellor's injunction, but the public have never been furnished with any report of his decision, nor been further informed upon the subject.

Under these circumstances, the public expectation has been disappointed, and the interest which was created has been left unsatisfied; while, on the other hand, the intended publication has been exposed to the charge of raising an expectation, and exciting an interest, which it was improper and unlawful to gratify. The nature of the letters, and memoirs themselves, has thus been left to the vague surmises which might be formed by every thoughtless mind, pampered by the constant food of personality and scandal, which the press has lately afforded in such abundance, and excited by the depraved character of many of those works which Lord Byron, in his

fallen state, has himself administered to their morbid appetite.

Thus situated, no one can deny that it became Mr. Dallas's bounden duty, both to defend himself from the charge which might thus be brought against him, and to lay before the public such an account of the work he had announced as might fairly explain its nature, and shelter it from the suspicions of impropriety, which the very name of Lord Byron seems so generally to excite. The latter of these objects has produced the publication of the present work; to which the reader is confidently referred, that he may form his opinion of the nature of that which has been suppressed. To obtain the former object, it can only be necessary to publish a simple narrative of the facts connected with the formation of the work, with its intended publication, and with its suppression. Such a narrative it was in the contemplation of the author of the following Recollections to have written, but it did not please God to prolong his life for the execution of his purpose. He has been taken from this

world, and the task he had proposed has devolved upon the Editor of the present volume; who, having been principally concerned, during his father's absence from England, in the transactions which will be recorded, is enabled to state them from his own information.

Mr. Dallas's knowledge of Lord Byron, and the circumstances which gave rise to his intention of writing any thing concerning him, are fully detailed in the following work. A few words, however, will convey such a recapitulation of them as will be necessary to enable the reader to understand this narrative. Having been in habits of intimacy, and in frequent correspondence with Lord Byron, from the year 1808 to the end of 1814, which correspondence about that period ceased, Mr. Dallas had many times heard him read portions of a book in which his Lordship inserted his opinion of the persons with whom he mixed. This book, Lord Byron said, he intended for publication after his death; and, from this idea, Mr. Dallas, at a subsequent period, adopted that of writing a faithful delineation of

Lord Byron's character, such as he had known him, and of leaving it for publication after the death of both ; and, calculating upon the human probability of Lord Byron's surviving himself, he meant the two posthumous works should thus appear simultaneously. Mr. Dallas's work was completed in the year 1819 ; and, in November of that year, he wrote to inform Lord Byron of his intended purpose*.

The event proved the fallacy of human probability—Mr. Dallas lived, at seventy, to see the death of Lord Byron, at thirty-seven. The idea of digesting his work into a different form, and of publishing it with the greater part of the letters which it contained, came into his mind even before the report of Lord Byron's death was fully

* The body of the letter which he wrote upon this occasion, will be found in the last chapter of this work, page 308. Although Lord Byron never replied to this letter, its writer had assurance that he received it—for, some time afterwards, a mutual friend who had been with Lord Byron, told him that his Lordship had mentioned the receiving of it, and referred to part of its contents.

confirmed. This, together with a circumstance more important to the object of this narrative, may be gathered from the contents of a letter which he wrote to the present Lord Byron from France, on the 18th of May, 1824. The following extract from which will show, that Mr. Dallas's first thought respecting these letters, was to consult with the most proper person, his nearest male relation and successor.

"I hear that you have been presented with a frigate by Lord Melville—I congratulate you on this, too; but I own I suspect myself to be more sorry than pleased at it, particularly if you are to go on a station of three years abroad. There are reports respecting your cousin, the truth of which would render your absence very awkward—pray state this to Mr. Wilmot, and consult him upon it. I hope, if you do go abroad, that you will run over in one of the Havre packets, to spend a few days with me previously. I cannot look forward to seeing you again in this world, and I should like to have some conversation with you, not only respecting the situation in which you stand as to the title, but also respecting Lord Byron himself. I have many letters from him, and from your father and mother, which are extremely interesting. Do not fail to see me, George, if but for a couple of days. The Southampton packets are passing Portsmouth three times a week, and if you could not stay longer,

I would not press you to do otherwise than return by the packet you came in."

The next packet, however, brought Mr. Dallas the confirmation of the report of Lord Byron's death, and he was not long in deciding upon the intention which he afterwards put in execution. The work, as it existed at that time, had been written with a view to publication at a period when, after the common age of man, Lord Byron should have quitted this world—that is, thirty or forty years hence. The progress of the baneful influence which certain persons, calling themselves his friends, obtained over Lord Byron's mind, when his genius first began to attract attention to him, was, in that work, more distinctly traced. Many circumstances were mentioned in it which might give pain to some now living, who could not be expected to be living then, or who, if they were then alive, would probably experience different feelings at that time to those with which they would recall the circumstances now. In the form it then possessed, therefore, Mr. Dallas would not think of publishing it; but he determined

to arrange the correspondence in such a manner as should present an interesting picture of Lord Byron's mind, and connecting the letters by memorandums and observations of his own, render the whole a faithful memoir of his life during the period to which the correspondence referred.

Having decided upon this, the materials were arranged accordingly; and the Editor can, of his own knowledge, assert, that many parts of the original manuscript were omitted, in tenderness for the feelings of both the very persons composing the partnership which has since so violently opposed the publication of the Correspondence, and that none of the parts then omitted have been allowed to appear in the present work. When this alteration was completed he came to London, and entered into an agreement with Mr. Charles Knight, of Pall Mall East, for the disposal of the copyright*. The book was immediately put to press,

* The introduction of Mr. Colburn's name, in the publication of the book, was in consequence of a subsequent arrangement between Mr. Knight and that gentleman, in which the author was not concerned.

and the usual announcements of it were inserted in the newspapers.

During the short stay which Mr. Dallas made in London, he endeavoured fruitlessly to see the present Lord Byron, who arrived in town, and sought him at his hotel the very day that he had left it, and therefore no sufficient communication took place at that time respecting the work which was about to appear. According to circumstances, which afterwards occurred, this was unfortunate, for had Lord Byron then seen Mr. Dallas, he would have been able at once to give his opinion when applied to by the executors ; instead of which, when an application was made to him to join in opposing the intended publication, being ignorant of its nature, he was of course unable to express his approbation of the work so fully as he afterwards did.

The necessary arrangements being made, Mr. Dallas returned to France, for the purpose of taking steps for the simultaneous publication of a French translation, in Paris. Of this, further notice will be taken hereafter, and it is not necessary, for the

present, to refer to it. In passing through Southampton, Mr. Dallas paid a visit to his niece, the sister of the present Lord Byron, who was in correspondence with Mrs. Leigh, the half sister of the late Lord Byron. Through her he sent a message to Mrs. Leigh, informing her of the nature of the Correspondence then in the press. This is worthy of remark, as it is one of the many assurances that the nature of the intended publication was such as could not but be satisfactory to the real friends of Lord Byron, which have been afforded to the parties who have prevented the Correspondence from being laid before the British public. This message was sent on the 20th of June, 1824, and it was faithfully forwarded to Mrs. Leigh.

On the 23d of June, however, Mr. Hobhouse addressed the following letter to Mr. Dallas :

“ 6, Albany, London, June 23.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I see by the newspapers, and I have heard from other quarters, that it is your intention to publish a volume of memoirs, interspersed with letters and other

documents relative to Lord Byron. I cannot believe this to be the case, as from what I had the pleasure of knowing of you, I thought that you would never think of taking such a step without consulting, or at least giving warning to the family and more immediate friends of Lord Byron. As to the publication of Lord Byron's private letters, I am certain, that for the present, at least, and without a previous inspection by his family, no man of honour and feeling can for a moment entertain such an idea—and I take the liberty of letting you know, that Mrs. Leigh, his Lordship's sister, would consider such a measure as quite unpardonable.

“ An intimacy of twenty years with his Lordship, may perhaps justify me in saying, that I am sure he would deprecate, had he any means of interfering, the exposure of his private writings, unless after very mature consultation with those who have the greatest interest in his fame and character, I mean his family and relations.

“ I trust you will be so kind as to excuse me for my anxiety on this point, and for requesting you would have the goodness to make an early reply to this communication.

“ Yours, very faithfully,
“ JOHN C. HOBHOUSE.”

It is particularly to be remarked, that this letter is written without professing to be by any other authority whatever than that which the writer's “ intimacy” with the late Lord Byron might give him. He

"takes the liberty of letting Mr. Dallas know that Mrs. Leigh, his Lordship's sister, would consider" the measure which he knew that gentleman had taken "to be quite unpardonable;" he has the modesty to acknowledge that this is a liberty; but he takes a very much greater liberty without any similar acknowledgment; he asserts, that "no man of honour and feeling can for a moment entertain such an idea," as that which he writes to say he has seen by the newspapers, and has heard from other quarters, Mr. Dallas has not only entertained, but acted upon. But the principal point to be considered is, that Mr. Hobhouse writes, perhaps, in the character of Lord Byron's "more immediate friend;" but that he does not hint at having any authority, and least of all, the authority of an Executor; and this for the strongest possible reason, that he was not then aware that he had been appointed Lord Byron's executor, which fact he himself acknowledged upon a subsequent occasion. Certainly, on receiving this letter, Mr. Dallas had no idea of its being written by an exe-

cutor, nor is it to be concealed, that its receipt excited feelings of considerable irritation in his mind.

Very shortly after writing this letter, Mr. Hobhouse found himself associated with Mr. John Hanson, as executor to Lord Byron's will ; and not receiving any letter from Mr. Dallas, he, on the 30th June, called upon Mr. Knight, the publisher, taking with him a gentleman whom he introduced as Mr. Williams. This gentleman was to be witness to the conversation that might take place ; though Mr. Hobhouse prefaced his object by expressions of a friendly tendency. Mr. Knight not having any reason to expect a visit of the nature which this proved to be, was not prepared with any one to stand in a similar situation on his part ; but the very moment that the conference was ended he took notes of what had passed. Mr. Hobhouse stated, that he had written to Mr. Dallas, to complain of the indelicacy of publishing Lord Byron's letters, before the interment of his remains ; that Mrs. Leigh had not been consulted ; and that Mr. Dallas had not

the concurrence of Lord Byron's family in the intended publication ;—that he called on Mr. Knight officially, as Executor, to say this, though when he wrote to Mr. Dallas he did not know that Lord Byron had appointed him one of his executors. Mr. Hobhouse thought Mr. Dallas had a right to publish Lord Byron's letters to himself; but he doubted his right to publish those of Lord Byron to his mother. Mr. Knight said that he believed Mr. Dallas would be able to show that Lord Byron had given those letters to him. Mr. Hobhouse replied, that if Mr. Dallas failed in that, he should move for an Injunction. Mr. Knight said, that the question of delicacy, as to the time of publication, must be settled with Mr. Dallas ;—that the publisher could only look to that question in a commercial view ; but that having read the work carefully, he could distinctly state, that the family and the executors need feel no apprehensions as to its tendency, as the work was calculated to elevate Lord Byron's moral and intellectual character. Mr. Hobhouse observed, that if individuals were

not spoken of with bitterness, and opinions very freely expressed in these letters, they were not like Lord Byron's letters in general. He himself had a heap of Lord Byron's letters, but he could never think of publishing them. The conference ended by Mr. Knight stating, that a friend of Mr. Dallas, a gentleman of high respectability, superintended the work through the press; that Mr. Hobhouse's application should be mentioned to him;—but that he, Mr. Knight, was not then at liberty to mention that gentleman's name.

Mr. Knight lost no time in informing the present editor of the conversation he had had with Mr. Hobhouse; and as the publisher had referred to some one intrusted by Mr. Dallas with the charge of conducting the progress of the work through the press, but had hesitated mentioning his name, not having authority to do so, the editor immediately addressed the following letter to Mr. Hobhouse, without however being aware of that which he had written to Mr. Dallas :—

*"Wooburn Vicarage, near Beaconsfield, Bucks,
3d July, 1824.*

" SIR,

" MR. KNIGHT has informed me of the conversation he has had with you upon the subject of Lord Byron's correspondence.

" I might have expected that as you are not unacquainted with my father, his character would have been a sufficient guarantee of the proper nature of any work which should appear before the public under his direction; and I might naturally have hoped that it would have guarded him from the suspicion of impropriety or indelicacy. In the present case, both his general character as a christian and a gentleman, and his particular connexion with the family of Lord Byron, should have prevented the alarm which appears to have been excited in your mind, for I will not suppose the relations of Lord Byron and my father to have participated in it;—an alarm which I must consider as unjustifiable as it is ungrounded.

" Since these causes have not had their proper effect in your mind, it becomes necessary for me, as my father's representative and agent in the whole of this business, distinctly to state, that the forthcoming correspondence of the late Lord Byron contains nothing which one gentleman ought not to write, nor another gentleman to publish. The work will speedily speak for itself, and will show that my father's object has been to place the original character of Lord Byron's mind in its true light, to show the much of good that was in it; and the work leaves him when the good became obscured in the much of evil that I fear afterwards pre-

dominated. There is no man on earth, Sir, who loved Lord Byron more truly, or was more jealous for his fair fame, than my father, as long as there was a possibility of his fame being fair; and though that possibility ceased, the affection remained, and will be evinced by the forthcoming endeavour to show that there existed in Lord Byron that which good men might have loved.

" As to any fear for the character of others who may be mentioned in the work, my father, Sir, is incapable of publishing personalities; and Lord Byron, at the time he corresponded with my father, was, I believe, incapable of writing what ought not to be published. If, at any subsequent period, in corresponding with others, he should have degraded himself to do so, I trust that his correspondents will be wise enough to abstain from making public what ought never to have been written.

" The letters which Lord Byron wrote to his mother were given by him unreservedly to my father, in a manner which seemed to have reference to their future publication; but which certainly rendered them my father's property, to dispose of in what way he might think fit. Should you think it necessary to resort to any measures to obtain further proof of this, it will only tend to the more public establishing of the authenticity of these letters, and can only be considered as a matter of dispute of property, as Lord Byron's best friends cannot but wish them published.

" Being charged by my father with the entire arrangement of this publication, you may have occasion to write to me; it may therefore be right to inform you that I have long since left the profession in which I was

engaged when we met at Cadiz ; and, having taken orders, I have the ministerial charge of this parish ; to which letters may be directed as this is dated.

“ I remain,

“ Your obedient Servant,

“ ALEX. R. C. DALLAS.”

Although Mr. Dallas had not thought proper to *reply* to Mr. Hobhouse's unauthorised communication, he did not leave it altogether unregarded ; but, immediately upon receiving it, he wrote to Mrs. Leigh the following letter :—

“ *Ste. Adresse, June 30th, 1824.*

“ MADAM,

“ I have just received a letter, of which I inclose you a copy. I see by the direction, through what channel it has been forwarded to me. As the letter is signed by the son of a gentleman, I would answer it, could I do it in such a manner as to be of service to the mind of the writer, but having no hope of that, I shall content myself with practising the humility of putting up with it for the present. And here I should conclude my letter to you, did I not, my dear madam, remember you not only as the sister of Lord Byron, but as the cousin of the present Lord Byron and of Julia Heath. But in doing this, I cannot relinquish my feelings. I must profess that I do not believe that you authorised such a letter. That you should have

felt an anxiety upon the occasion, I think very natural, and I should have been glad to have prevented it. It was not my fault that it was not prevented, for (premising, however, that I neither saw nor do see any obligation to submit my conduct to the guidance of any relation of Lord B.'s) I took some pains to let my intention be known to his family, and even to communicate the nature of the publication I had in view. On the report of Lord B.'s death, I wrote to George, and mentioned these papers; before I despatched my letter, his death was confirmed. I urged my wish to see George—I had no answer—I arrived in London, wrote to him and requested to see him—I inquired also if you were in town—the servant brought me word that both you and Lord B. were out of town, but that any letter should be forwarded—I was two days at the New Hummums, and I received no answer. I do not state this as being hurt at it—George had much to occupy him—but I soon after saw Julia Heath, who mentioned your anxiety. This channel of such a communication was natural, and certainly the next best to a direct one from yourself, which I trust would have reflected no dishonour on you—but I met the communication by my niece kindly, and sent you a message through her which she thought would please you, and certainly I did not mean to displease you by it. By that communication I must still abide, repeating only, that if, in the book I am about to publish, there is a sentence which should give you uneasiness, I should be totally at a loss to find it out myself. I will go further, my dear madam, and inform you, that Lord Byron was perfectly well ac-

quainted with the existence of my MS., and with my intention of publishing it, or rather of having it published when it pleased God to call him from this life—but I little suspected that I should myself see the publication of it. I own, too, that the MS., as intended for posthumous publication, does contain some things that would give you pain, and much that would make others blush—but, as I told Julia Heath, I wished as much as possible to avoid giving pain, even to those that deserved it, and I curtailed my MS. nearly a half. If I restore any portion of what I have crossed out, shall I not be justified by the insolence of the letter I have received from a pretended friend of Lord Byron, and who seems to be ignorant that a twenty years' companionship may exist without a spark of friendship? I do not wonder at his agitation; it is for himself that he is agitated, not for Lord Byron. But I will not waste your time on this subject. I will conclude, by assuring you, that I feel that Lord B. will stand in *my* volume in the amiable point of view that he ought and would have stood always but for *his friends*.

“It was my purpose to order a copy of the volume to be sent to you. As I trust you will do me the honour by a few lines, to let me know that it was not your intention to have me insulted, I will hope still to have that pleasure.

“I am, dear madam,
“Yours, faithfully,

“R. C. DALLAS.”

It has been attempted to throw all the blame, in the whole of the subsequent transactions, upon this letter. Perhaps it might have been more desirable that it should not have been written immediately upon the receipt of one which was felt as an insult, however it might have been intended ; and Mr. Dallas did not scruple afterwards to express his regret, not only for any expression in this letter which might appear to be intemperate or hasty, but for the irritated impulse which could produce it, and he has authorised the editor to state this publicly ; in doing which, however, he cannot refrain from protesting against the misrepresentation to which the whole letter has been subjected. It appears that it has been distorted into the conveyance of a threat that the writer intended to insert in the proposed publication what would give pain to Mrs. Leigh, and make Lord Byron's friends blush. No fair-judging person, after reading the whole of the letter, can conscientiously say that he rises from it with such an idea in his mind. In a subsequent letter to the editor, Mr. Dallas

strongly points this out. He says, “ It must be a resolution to misunderstand the letter, to say that I intended to restore what I had erased. ‘ If (conditional) in the book I AM about to publish, there IS a sentence which can give you uneasiness I should be totally at a loss to find it myself.’ Can any doubt exist after reading this? ‘ As INTENDED for publication.’—‘ If I restore any portion.’ I have read the letter again, and do not think it affords the ground for blame thrown upon me, after having thought well of it.”

But besides that no such intention can fairly be gathered from the letter, it must not be forgotten to be observed, that in stating that the manuscript, as intended for posthumous publication, does contain some things which would give Lord Byron’s sister pain, the writer only meant to suppose that a sister must feel pain on being told of the errors of a brother. It was not in his mind to convey an idea that Mrs. Leigh would feel pain *on her own account* from any thing which was disclosed in the original manuscript. The Editor has read that manu-

script, which is now in his possession, with great care, more than once, and has been unable to discover one word that could have that tendency. How is it, then, that upon the ground which this letter is said to afford, that the correspondence “ contained observations upon or affecting persons now living, and the publication of which is likely to occasion considerable pain to such persons*,” such an alarm was excited in the mind of Mrs. Leigh?

That a very great alarm was excited, which ultimately led to the legal proceedings, is most certain. The letter was sent to the present Lord Byron as proof of the offensiveness of the proposed publication, and an immediate answer required of him to sanction the opposition to it. His conduct was indeed very different. In a subsequent letter to the editor (dated 11th July), he says, “ I was applied to for my opinion. I answered, that if they had good grounds that any part of the work was likely to hurt the feelings of any relations, that the work ought to be inspected by one or two of his

* Quoted from the Bill in Chancery, filed by Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson.

(Lord Byron's) relatives ; but, I added, if I knew Mr. Dallas, as I thought I did, I was convinced he could not object to show the work to Lady Noel Byron as a relative ; but I felt convinced there was nothing in it that could reflect discredit on the deceased, or any one related to him—that I knew my uncle's opinion was highly in favour of the late Lord Byron, as his admiration was unbounded of his genius. Besides the correspondence between them was of a date far before any domestic misery ensued. I felt distressed at being applied to, and not being on the spot could not say what had taken place."

The Editor has good grounds for believing that a similar application was made to Lady Noel Byron on the subject, who declined interfering in the matter.

Previously, however, to any legal steps being pursued, Mrs. Leigh wrote the following answer to Mr. Dallas's letter :—

“ *St. James's Palace, July 3, 1824.*

“ SIR,

“ I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th June, and am sorry to observe the spirit in which it was written.

"In consequence of the message you sent me through Mrs. Heath, (confirming the report of your intention to publish your manuscript,) I applied to Mr. Hobhouse, requesting him to write to you, and expressing to him that I did, *as I still do*, think that it would be quite unpardonable to publish private letters of my poor brother's without previously consulting his family. I selected Mr. Hobhouse as the most proper person to communicate with you, from his being my brother's executor, and one of his most intimate and confidential friends, although, perhaps, I might have hesitated between him and the present Lord Byron, (our mutual relative,) had not the illness and hurry of business of the latter, determined me not to add to his annoyances—and I must also state, that I was ignorant of your communication to him until I received your letter.

I feel equal regret and surprise at your thinking it necessary to call upon me to disclaim an intention of "*having you insulted*,"—*regret*, that you should so entirely misunderstand my feelings; and *surprise*, because after having repeatedly read over Mr. Hobhouse's letter, I cannot discover in it one word which could lead to such a conclusion on your part.

" Hoping that this explanation may prove satisfactory,

" I remain, Sir,

" Your obedient servant,

" AUGUSTA LEIGH."

There are several curious points in this letter, to which it will be necessary to draw the attention of the reader. Mr. Dallas's

message to Mrs. Leigh, sent through Mrs. Heath, was one which he states in his letter “ She (Mrs. Heath) thought would please her, and that certainly he did not mean to displease her by it.” He refers to that communication, and *repeats* (in writing what before had been only verbal) that “ if in the book he was about to publish, there was a sentence which should give her uneasiness, he should be totally at a loss to find it out himself.” The object of the message was, to assure Mrs. Leigh of the harmless, not to say pleasing, nature of the *intended* publication ; and yet, in referring to the message, and acknowledging the receipt of a letter which contained a *repetition* of it in writing, she only observes that it “ confirmed the report of Mr. Dallas’s intention to publish *his manuscript*,” and that, in consequence, she requested Mr. Hobhouse to let him know that she should think his conduct would be unpardonable. It is also somewhat strange, that having been so applied to by Lord Byron’s sister, Mr. Hobhouse, who at that time had no title to authority for making such a

communication in his own name, should not have stated the title which such an application from a near relation seemed to give him, and have written to Mr. Dallas as by direction of Mrs. Leigh, instead of merely "taking the liberty of letting him know" what Mrs. Leigh thought about the matter.

But there is a still more extraordinary circumstance in this letter. Mr. Hobhouse's conversation with Mr. Knight, which took place before Mr. Williams who came to act as witness, has been verified upon oath by Mr. Knight, from whose affidavit, registered in the Court of Chancery, the following is an extract :—

"On the 30th of June last, said plaintiff, John Cam Hobhouse, told defendant, Charles Knight, that he, said plaintiff, John Cam Hobhouse, had written such letter to said defendant, Robert Charles Dallas, and at the same time, told defendant, Charles Knight, that he, said plaintiff, John Cam Hobhouse, did not, at the time when he wrote said letter, know that he, said last-

named plaintiff, had been appointed an executor of the said Lord Byron."

Thus it appears, that at the time of writing the letter in question, Mr. Hobhouse was ignorant that he was the legal representative of Lord Byron; but, from Mrs. Leigh's letter, it also appears that *she was not ignorant of that circumstance*, since it was the special motive which induced her to "select Mr. Hobhouse," as the proper person to communicate with Mr. Dallas in preference to "the present Lord Byron, a mutual relative." As, therefore, it is impossible to suppose, that the lady in question could state what was not true; we can only wonder that, being privy to the contents of her brother's will, and knowing whom he had chosen to be his executors, she should never have informed them of the selection he had made.

The appearance of the Correspondence was promised to the public on the 12th of July, 1824; and it had nearly gone through the press when, on the 7th of July, Messrs.

Hobhouse and Hanson, as the legal representatives of the late Lord Byron, filed a Bill in Chancery, and, in consequence, obtained, on the same day, from the Vice-Chancellor, an Injunction to restrain the publication. This Bill was founded upon the joint affidavit of the executors, the matter of which, divested of its technicalities, was as follows:—

The deponents swear, that in the years 1809, 1810, and part of 1811, Lord Byron was travelling in various countries, from whence he wrote letters to his mother, Mrs. Catherine Gordon Byron, “that such letters were principally of a private and confidential nature, and none of them were intended to be published.” That Mrs. C. G. Byron died in the year 1811, intestate, and that Lord Byron being properly constituted her legal personal representative, possessed himself of these letters, and became absolutely and wholly entitled to them as his sole property. The deponents then swear, “that they have been informed, and verily believe, that the said Lord Byron was in the habits of correspon-

dence with Robert Charles Dallas," and that, in the course of such correspondence, Lord Byron wrote letters, "many of which were, as the said deponents believe, of a private and confidential nature"—"and that the said Lord Byron being about again to leave this country, deposited in the hands of the said Robert Charles Dallas for safe custody, all, and every, or a great many of the said letters, which he had written and sent to his mother*." And that, at the time of Lord Byron's death, such letters were in the custody of the said R. C. Dallas, together with those which his Lordship had written to him. Lord Byron's change of name to Noel Byron, and his death, are then sworn to; and also his will, and the proving of it, by which the deponents became his Lordship's legal representatives.

Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson then swear, "*that soon after the death of the*

* The exact words of the affidavit are quoted when they relate to important points, which will be afterwards referred to in this narrative, that the reader may judge fairly for himself.

said Lord Byron was known in England, the said R. C. Dallas, *as the said deponents verily believe*, formed a scheme, or plan, to print and publish the same, and with a view to such printing and publishing, *pretended to be* the absolute owner of all the said letters," and disposed of "such pretended copyright" for a considerable sum of money. Then the advertisement of the Correspondence is sworn to, and the belief of the deponents to the identity of the letters advertised for publication, with those before referred to in the affidavit. The affidavit goes on to affirm, "that the said Robert Charles Dallas never apprised him the said deponent, John Cam Hobhouse, of his intention to print and publish the said letters, or any of them." And Mr. Hobhouse swears that he wrote the letter of the 23d of June to Mr. Dallas; and he swears too that he got no answer; but he swears that, on the 30th of June, he "called on the said Charles Knight, and warned him not to proceed with the printing and publication of the said letters, and informed him that if he persevered in his intention," the two

deponents, Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson, "would, most probably, take legal means to restrain him."

The affidavit next states, that the deponents verily believe that Lord Byron's letters to his mother "were wholly written and composed by him, and that he did not deliver the same to the said R. C. Dallas, for the purpose of publication, but to be disposed of as he, the said Lord Byron, might direct." And that he never meant nor intended that they should be published—that they were, as the deponents verily believe, at the time of Lord Byron's death, his own sole and absolute property; and that they now belong to the said deponents, as his legal personal representatives. The deponents go on to swear that the letters written by Lord Byron to Mr. Dallas were, as they verily believe, "also wholly written and composed by the said Lord Byron; and that such letters are not, and never were, the sole and absolute property of the said R. C. Dallas; but that the said Lord Byron, in his life time had, and the said deponents, as his legal represen-

tatives, now have, at least, a partial and qualified property in such letters," which has never been relinquished or abandoned; and that Lord Byron never intended or gave permission to Mr. Dallas to publish them or any part of them.

Then comes the following clause, "And the said deponents *verily believe*, that the said several letters were written in the course of private and confidential correspondence, and the said deponents believe that many of them contain observations upon, or affecting, persons now living; and that the publication of them is likely to occasion considerable pain to such persons."

The Affidavit closes with the affirmation that the publication in question was intended to be made for the profit and advantage of the defendants; and "that such publication was, as the deponents conceived and believed, a breach of private confidence, and a violation of the rights of property," which, as the representatives of Lord Byron, they had in the letters.

Previous to stating the reply to this Affidavit, it may not be improper to make some observations upon the nature of its contents. It contains matter of opinion ; but no matter of fact relating to the point in question. There is a great deal of belief expressed, but not one reasonable ground upon which the belief is founded.

It is really a matter of surprise that any one should so implicitly believe that to be fact, which, upon the face of the business, he can only *suppose* to be so. Mr. Hobhouse never saw or read the letters written by Lord Byron to his mother, yet he *swears* (and in this case without the mention, that he *verily believes* ; but *as of his own knowledge,*) "that such letters were principally of a private and confidential nature." Any one might *suppose* that a man writing to his mother may write confidentially ; but few men would allow that supposition so much weight in their minds, as to enable them to swear that it was so. Mr. Hobhouse was travelling with Lord Byron during the time when many of these

letters were written, and probably he supposes that his Lordship may have often mentioned him to his mother. This seems an equally natural supposition with the other; and if it should have entered into Mr. Hobhouse's head, he would, by analogy, be equally ready to swear, not that he supposed he was often mentioned, but that he really was so. And yet, after reading Lord Byron's letters to his mother, it would never be gathered from them that his Lordship had any companion at all in his travels, as he always writes in the first person singular; except, indeed, that Mr. Hobhouse's name is mentioned in an enumeration of his suite; and, upon parting with him, Lord Byron expresses his satisfaction at being alone.

To the assertion respecting these unseen letters, Mr. Hobhouse adds, that "none of them were intended to be published." If it is meant to say, that they were not written with the intention of being published, as the sentence may seem to imply, nobody will deny the fact. If they had been, they would not have con-

tained the natural and unrestrained development of character which makes them valuable to the public now. But their not having been written with the intention of publication, by no means precludes the possibility of Lord Byron himself subsequently intending them to be published. Mr. Dallas has it in his Lordship's own hand-writing, that he did subsequently intend part of them, at least, to be published; because, having kept no other journal, he meant to cut up these letters into notes for the first and second Cantos of Childe Harold. This was, however, previous to his having given them to Mr. Dallas.

The same observation as that which has been made upon Mr. Hobhouse's *swearing* that Lord Byron's letters to his mother were confidential, will equally apply to his swearing that he believes his Lordship's letters to Mr. Dallas were so also. But when he *swears* "that Lord Byron, being about again to leave this country, deposited the letters to his mother in the hands of R. C. Dallas for safe custody;"—when he states this upon oath, not as verily believing

it—not as supposing it—but as knowing that it was so—without stating any ground whatever for his knowledge of a circumstance in which he had been in no way concerned, it is hardly possible to conjecture how extensive Mr. Hobhouse's interpretation of an oath may become. Upon this subject I cannot forbear inserting an extract from a letter written by Mr. Dallas to his publisher from Paris, immediately that he was informed of the issuing of the injunction, and before he was fully made acquainted with the whole circumstances. He says, “so far from thinking it wrong to publish such a correspondence, I feel that it belongs in a manner to the public; and that I have no right to withhold it. If the Vice-Chancellor has been made acquainted with the spirit of the work, there is an end to the injunction; for as to the property in the letters from Lord Byron to his mother the affidavit sets that at rest*; and in the

* He alludes to an affidavit relating principally to this point, which he sent in this letter the moment he heard of

volume itself it may be seen that Mr. Hobhouse made a false assertion (I hope it was not upon oath,) in his application for the injunction, when he says that Lord Byron deposited them with me for safe custody only, when his Lordship was going abroad. The text shows, that I have long considered them as mine, before Lord Byron thought of leaving England ; and that he also considered them so. There was no memorandum made of the circumstance ; it was a gift made personally, and as had happened in the case of *Childe Harold* and of the *Corsair*. What can be more conclusive than the words with which he accompanied the gift ? The additional words I allude to, conveyed an idea of some dissatisfaction with others, and a feeling that my attachment and judgment were more to be relied upon. I trust that the circumstances have been made clear to the Vice-Chancellor ;

the Injunction ; but which, not being sufficiently full upon other points, was not made use of in the legal proceedings.

and that all the disgraceful insinuation of the application, that I am capable of publishing letters which ought not to be made public, has been wiped away. I shall be glad to find this carried even so far as to show, that, although I did not strictly or morally hold myself bound to submit my intentions of publishing to the direction of Lord Byron's family, I was attentive to their feelings, and that it was not my fault that a communication did not take place upon the subject. As to any delicacy towards the executors, I declare to you, on my honour, that till I saw it afterwards in a public newspaper, I did not know that the executors of Lord Byron were those *confidential friends, the Mr. H.'s*, though one of them (Mr. Hobhouse) had thought proper to give me counsel in very improper language." "Again, why should Lord Byron deposit these letters with *me* for safe custody, when these two confidential friends were at hand, and other confidential friends, and his sister? There is an absurdity on the face of the assertion."

It is not intended here to answer Mr.

Hobhouse's statements, which will be better met by the counter-affidavits themselves, but merely to make some necessary observations ; and, amongst them, it is impossible not to observe, with regret, that Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson, in swearing that they proved Lord Byron's will in the proper Ecclesiastical Court, and became his Lordship's legal representatives, did not insert the date of the probate, or even the period when their appointment came to their knowledge*. Such an insertion might have prevented all obscurity in a subsequent part of the affidavit, where it is sworn, "that on the 23d June last, being soon after the *deponents* were informed of such intention, (of publishing,) deponent, John Cam Hobhouse, wrote and sent a letter of that date to R. C. Dallas, representing to him the impropriety of publishing said letters." As the passage stands, it does not appear whether Mr. Hobhouse wrote

* It was understood that Lord Byron's will was not to be opened till his remains arrived in England ;—the vessel which bore those remains reached the Nore on the 1st of July, seven days after the date of Mr. Hobhouse's letter to Mr. Dallas.

as “the more immediate friend” of Lord Byron, or with the authority of an executor. The difference is somewhat material; and as the affidavit mentions that the letter was written soon after the deponents (in the plural number) were informed of Mr. Dallas’s intention, it certainly wants the information which the reader now possesses, but which the affidavit does not supply, to make it clear that he wrote merely as “the more immediate friend.”

But the said deponents “*verily believe*” that Mr. Dallas formed a scheme to print and publish the letters “soon after the death of Lord Byron was known in England.” What could possibly have been the grounds of a belief so firm, that the persons believing come forward to attest it by affidavit in a Court of Justice? The gravamen of the matter is, that the scheme was formed soon after Lord Byron’s death was known, *and not before*; and this Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson swear they believe to be the case. A dozen persons of the highest respectability read the letters arranged for publication, in the first intended memoir,

years before Lord Byron's death ; some of whom state it upon oath, and all the others would have done so if it had been considered necessary by the legal advisers. It is to be lamented that so much firm faith has been thrown away upon so slight a foundation ; and it is to be hoped, that the persons who can believe so easily are not inconsistently difficult of belief, upon points which will hereafter more materially concern themselves.

When it was known that the injunction had been obtained, intelligence of it was forwarded to Mr. Dallas, at Paris, and his immediate presence was required in London. The following certificate, enclosed in a letter from a friend, was the reply received to this communication :—

“ This is to certify that Robert Charles Dallas is now labouring under a very severe attack of inflammation of the chest, which was attended by fever and delirium ;—that he is now under my professional care, and that his symptoms were of so dangerous a character as to render large bleedings ne-

cessary, even at his advanced age. He is at present better, but certainly unable to undertake a journey.

“ Given under my hand at Paris, Rue du Mail, Hotel de Mars, this 11th day of July, 1824.

“ DAVID BARRY, M. D.”

In consequence of this unfortunate illness it became necessary to send out a commission from the Court of Chancery, to receive Mr. Dallas's answer at Paris. This occasioned considerable expense, and a delay which was regretted at the time; but it afterwards appeared that the decision in the cause could not have been hastened even had no obstacle of this nature intervened.

The Answer was founded upon several affidavits, of which the first was that of Mr. Dallas himself, wherein he “ denies it to be true, that the letters of Lord Byron to his mother were principally of a private and confidential nature; but, on the contrary, affirms that such letters were principally of a general nature; and for the most part con-

sisted of accounts and descriptions of various places which the said Lord Byron visited, and scenes which he witnessed, and adventures which he encountered, and remarkable persons whom he met with in the course of his travels, and observations upon the manners, customs, and curiosities of foreign countries and people ; and although he admitted that in some of such letters matters were mentioned, or alluded to, of a *private* nature, yet he swears that such matters of a private nature were only occasionally and incidentally mentioned or alluded to, and did not form the principal contents or subjects of the letters.” And he further says, that “ to the best of his judgment and belief none of these letters are of a *confidential* or secret nature,” or contain any matters of such a nature.

Mr. Dallas goes on to swear, that “ being in habits of friendship and correspondence with Lord Byron, as Mr. Hobhouse had stated, in the course of that friendship his Lordship gave him, as free and absolute gifts, the copyrights of the first and second Cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and

of the *Corsair*," which gifts were respectively made by word of mouth and delivery of the original manuscripts to him; and that a considerable portion of the letters from Lord Byron to himself were written "at the times when the poems were preparing for or in the course of publication," and that they "contained or related to divers alterations, additions, and amendments which were from time to time made, or proposed to be made in the poems, or otherwise related to them,"—and that "other parts of these letters related to matters of general literature, morals, and politics, and other subjects of a general nature, and the individual opinions and feelings of Lord Byron;" and that "some very few parts of such letters related to other private matters, which were only occasionally and incidentally mentioned or alluded to therein, and did not form the principal contents or subjects of such letters, and were not in any respect of a *confidential* or secret nature."

Mr. Dallas then states, in his affidavit, that Lord Byron thought of leaving England in 1816, but that "in or about the

month of April, 1812, he being in conversation* with Lord Byron, his Lordship promised to bring and give to him a letter which he had written to his mother on the matter which formed the subject of such conversation, and that some time afterwards, that is to say, in the month of June, 1814, Lord Byron, in performance of such promise, brought, and gave, and delivered to him not only the letter so promised, but also all the rest of the letters which he, Lord Byron, had written to his mother, and at the same time he addressed to Mr. Dallas the following words:—

“Take them.—They are yours to do what you please with. Some day or other they will be curiosities.”

From this Mr. Dallas swears that he “believes that Lord Byron in so delivering these letters to him, and addressing him in this manner, did fully intend to give the same letters and every of them, and the copyright

* The sale of Newstead Abbey was the subject of these conversations.

thereof, and all his, Lord Byron's, property, right, title, and interest therein to him, Mr. Dallas, for his own use and benefit, as a free and absolute gift, in the same manner as he had given the copyrights of the poems ;" and further, " that at the time of this gift Lord Byron contemplated the probability of the letters being afterwards published by Mr. Dallas."

The deponent distinctly denies that the letters were left with him for safe custody ; and alleges that Lord Byron did not leave England until 1816, that is, two years after the gift of the letters.

The affidavit further states, that for several years previous to the death of Lord Byron the deponent was engaged in compiling and writing memoirs of his life and writings, and that in these memoirs were inserted and embodied many of the letters both to Mrs. C. G. Byron and to himself ; and that he did so for the purpose of illustrating and giving authority to the memoirs, and of placing in a just and favourable point of view the conduct, character, and opinions of Lord Byron, their insertion being essential to the illustrating and giving au-

thority to the memoirs ; and that for many years previous to the death of Lord Byron, he had formed the intention and plan to publish these letters in the beforementioned memoirs ; and that Lord Byron, so long ago as the year 1819, was aware of his intention and plan so to publish them. The letter to Lord Byron, inserted in the last chapter of the following Recollections, is there sworn to ; with the addition, that his Lordship never applied to, or requested Mr. Dallas to desist or abstain from publishing the memoirs, nor from inserting in them any of the letters in his possession.

These are the important parts of the affidavit made by Mr. Dallas, although it necessarily follows the whole of the Bill filed against him, denying or admitting its several allegations, as the case requires. There is, however, one other part of the affidavit which is important, though only matter of opinion. It states, that to the best of Mr. Dallas's judgment and belief, the publication of the correspondence as advertised, " will be of considerable service to the cause of literature and poetry, as being illustrative of many of the best

poems, and other valuable works, of the said Lord Byron ; and will also tend greatly to improve and exalt the public estimation of his conduct, character, and opinions."

The affidavits of Mr. Charles Knight and Mr. Henry Colburn follow, which are mere matters of form; except only as far as relates to the conversation which Mr. Knight held with Mr. Hobhouse on the 30th June. An extract from Mr. Knight's affidavit has been already given, in which he states, that Mr. Hobhouse declared to him that he did not know he was Lord Byron's executor at the time he wrote to Mr. Dallas. Mr. Knight, who had read all the letters, also swears, that none of them were of a *confidential* nature.

The affidavit of the Editor of the present work is the next. It states, that he had frequently seen and read the original manuscript of the memoirs first compiled by his father, containing the letters in question ; and knew, so long ago as 1822, of his intention to publish them at a future period. That, in that year, Mr. Dallas deposited

the original manuscript in his hands, with directions to publish it in such manner as he should think fit, after the death of Lord Byron ; Mr. Dallas assuming that he should die before his Lordship. The affidavit then details the change which took place in this intention, and the alterations in the work, to fit it for publication when Lord Byron's death was known ; declaring, at the same time, the deponent's opinion, that as now intended for publication, there is not a single passage in the letters which could affect or injure the character, or give pain to the feelings of any person whomsoever. The Editor corroborates the testimony already given, that none of the letters were of a confidential nature. He swears that the present Lord Byron has read the intended publication, and knows of the intention to publish it ; that he has never expressed to the present Editor any disapprobation of or objection to the publication ; but, on the contrary, has expressed to him his concurrence in, and approbation of it. The Editor also swears, that for several years previously to the death of Lord Byron,

he had frequently heard Mr. Dallas declare that his Lordship had made him a present of his letters to his mother; and had also frequently seen in Mr. Dallas's possession a bundle of letters inclosed in a cover or envelope, on which was written "Letters of Lord Byron to his mother, given to me by him, June, 1814;" or words to that effect.

The only other corroborative affidavit which the legal advisers thought necessary to make use of, was one made by Alexander Young Spearman, Esq., who states, that so long ago as the year 1822, he had read the manuscript memoir in which was embodied the letters in question; and that, to the best of his judgment, there was nothing contained in the work or in the letters which could lower the character of Lord Byron, or which was of a confidential or secret nature; but, on the contrary, that from reading them, he had formed a higher and better opinion of the character and conduct of Lord Byron than he had previously entertained; and that the letters were, for the most part, upon subjects of

general and public interest ; and of such a nature, that their publication would be an advantage to the cause of literature, and no breach of honour or confidence.

From the substance of these affidavits, it may probably strike the reader as singular, that Mr. Dallas himself should have said nothing concerning the approbation of the present Lord Byron ; while the Editor swears directly to his knowledge of, and concurrence in, the publication. To account for this, and to prove how ready both the Author of the memoirs and the Editor were to make any reasonable arrangement by which the pledge to the public might be fulfilled, it will be necessary to state some circumstances which occurred previous to the filing of the Answer to the Bill in Chancery ; which, as has already been shown, was unavoidably delayed.

The present Lord and Lady Byron happened to be on a visit to the Editor at his house at Wooburn, towards the end of July ; and there they had an opportunity of reading the whole of the work as intended

for publication, and which had so nearly gone through the press, that they read three-fourths of it in print. Whatever pain Lord Byron might feel on account of the early development of the seeds of vice in his predecessor and near relation, he felt immediately that the work was highly calculated to raise his Lordship's character from the depth into which it had subsequently fallen; and he unreservedly expressed his wish that the publication should proceed. A single passage in the narrative part, which was observed upon by Lord Byron, was omitted according to his desire. With these feelings he endeavoured, in the kindest manner, to clear away the obstacles which impeded its progress; and fearing lest his former reply to the sudden demand for his opinion upon the subject, as it had been conditional, might be construed into direct disapprobation, he expressed himself ready to state his concurrence in the publication. The following affidavit was accordingly drawn up, with the approbation of his own legal adviser :—

“ George Anson, Lord Byron, maketh oath, and saith, that he well knows the defendant, R. C. Dallas, who is the uncle of this deponent, and that he well knows that the said R. C. Dallas was formerly in the habit of corresponding with the late George Gordon, Lord Byron, to whom the deponent is the nearest male relation and successor. And this deponent further saith, that having been informed that a certain work was proposed to be published by the said R. C. Dallas, and to include certain letters written by the said George Gordon, Lord Byron, to him, and to Mrs. Catharine Gordon Byron, the mother of the said George Gordon, Lord Byron, this deponent declared his reluctance to such publication taking place until the said work should have been examined by the relatives and friends of the said George Gordon, Lord Byron; and that the said deponent now maketh oath and saith, that he has since read the said work, entitled “ Private Correspondence, &c.;” and the letters from the said George Gordon, Lord Byron, to

his mother, and to the defendant, R. C. Dallas, included therein ; and this deponent further saith, that he does not now entertain any objection to the publication of the said work."

This affidavit received the sanction of Lord Byron ; but it having been ascertained that the executors did not intend to make any use of the conditional opinion that his Lordship had expressed, it was not thought necessary that he should swear it ; as from motives of delicacy it was wished if possible not to mix him up with a dispute in which he stood in close connexion with both sides. Nothing but the absolute necessity which now exists of making the public fully acquainted with all the circumstances connected with this strange proceeding, would induce the Editor to refer to him. As, however, his Lordship's conduct throughout the whole business has been not only manly and open, but also guided by an amiable desire of conciliation, the public mention of these transactions can only be a testimony highly to his credit.

In consequence of what had taken place, Lord Byron called on Mr. Hobhouse, and personally stated his own knowledge of the nature of the work, and his opinion respecting the propriety of its publication. He also stated, that he knew the editor was by no means averse to enter into any reasonable arrangement by which the difficulties in the minds of the executors might be overcome. It appears that the plea by which their opposition was defended, was, that other persons possessed letters of the late Lord Byron, which it would be highly improper to give to the public; and that the executors felt it their duty to establish their right to prevent the publication of any letters. However, Mr. Hobhouse supposed that matters might be arranged if Mr. Dallas would consent to insert in the title-page of the work, "published by permission of the executors," of course submitting it first to the inspection of some person approved of by them.

Upon immediate consultation with the Editor, he declined giving a promise that such words should be used until he had

seen his legal advisers ; but he authorised Lord Byron to state that *he perfectly concurred in the spirit of the proposed arrangement*, and offered at once to submit the work to the inspection of a friend of Lord Byron's, well known to the executors, but with whom the Editor himself was totally unacquainted, and to abide by his opinion. This was mentioned within the same hour to Mr. Hobhouse, who was satisfied with the person named, and promised to consult his colleague, Mr. Hanson, upon the business. It may not be improper here to insert part of a letter, written by Mr. Dallas to the Editor, upon hearing of this proposal :

“ As to an executor’s *veto*—shall an executor be allowed to decide on the publication of a work (letters) on general topics, when it may be enough that there is in it a difference of opinion on religion, morality, or politics ? This is an argument which should be strongly urged. I see neither law nor equity in such a *veto*, yet do not deny either, if the letters are libellous ; but

this is not to be vaguely supposed, and my letter to Mrs. Leigh, far from supporting such a suggestion, supports the contrary.” “However, I do not wish to keep up contention, and have no objection (*go which way the Chancellor's decision may*) to say, printed with consent of the executors—and they will be foolish not to consent, for the circulation of the work would be but wider if they do not; so act in this as you judge best. But I do not think the sheets should be shown to him. * * * * *

* * * * *

I believe I cut out the Portsmouth anecdote. I know I did, and he is hardly even alluded to in any of the letters; but he ought not to see it.” “The Chancellor's dissolving this injunction is no reason why he should not grant injunctions against the publications of Moore or * * * which, unsupported by such an answer and such testimonies as mine, might be confirmed. Our case does not decide the general question: our documents take it out of the general case of publishing injurious letters.”

While Mr. Hobhouse went to consult

his colleague, the Editor applied to his legal advisers, by whom certain legal difficulties, about the word “ permission,” were stated to him. In consequence of what there took place, he drew out the following statement, which he gave to Lord Byron as the ground for the future conducting of the negotiation.

“ Mr. Dallas has no objection to insert the following advertisement after the title page of the work.

“ ADVERTISEMENT.

“ The publication of this work having been delayed in consequence of an injunction from the Court of Chancery, obtained on the application of the executors of Lord Byron, it is proper to state upon their authority that the work had not been submitted to their inspection, when they entertained their objection to its publication ; but that, having since been made acquainted with its contents, they have withdrawn their objection, and consented to the dissolution of the injunction.”

“ If the objection of the executors of the late Lord Byron be, that the publication of this work should not be drawn into a precedent by others, for giving to the world their improper and unauthorised compilations relative to Lord Byron, it is presumed that this advertisement will be considered sufficient for that purpose.

“ If the executors do not consider this to be sufficient for that purpose, Mr. Dallas would only object to the words ‘ published by permission of the executors of the late Lord Byron,’ being printed with the work, inasmuch as it may seem to *acknowledge a property* as belonging to the executors, which he does not acknowledge to belong to them—but to meet the supposed object of the executors, as above stated, Mr. Dallas will consent to the insertion of those words, if the executors will sign a paper to the following effect :—

“ We, the executors of the late Lord Byron, hereby assign and make over to R. C. Dallas, his heirs, executors, or assigns, all and every interest, property, right, claim, or demand whatsoever, (*if any such*

we have,) in such letters of the said Lord Byron as are inserted in a work, entitled 'Private Correspondence of Lord Byron, &c. &c.' whether such letters are addressed to the said R. C. Dallas, or to Mrs. Catherine Gordon Byron, the mother of the said Lord Byron.'"

In the mean time, however, the two executors had consulted together, and Lord Byron received the following communication from Mr. Hobhouse :—

" I saw Mr. Hanson this evening, and have to inform you, that he objects to stopping the proceedings until the question can be laid before counsel, after your friend Mr. Dallas has filed his affidavits, or made his answer."

This opening being thus closed up, the answer and affidavits were filed. Whether the question of negotiation was laid before counsel or not, Mr. Hanson best knows ; but all that the Editor can say is, that four affidavits were immediately filed, intended to oppose the dissolution of the injunction.

The first was the affidavit of William

Fletcher, in which he swears that he had lived with Lord Byron for the last eighteen years, as his Lordship's valet and head servant, and accompanied him abroad in the month of April, 1816. He then declares, "that when he was with Lord Byron at Venice, in the latter end of the year 1816, or the beginning of 1817, in a conversation which he then and there had with his Lordship, touching his property and things which he had left behind him in England, the deponent represented to him, that some of his (Fletcher's) property had been seized by his Lordship's creditors, together with his own property, when Lord Byron stated to the deponent, that he would make good his (Fletcher's) loss. And he, the said Lord Byron, then told the deponent, that he was extremely glad that he the said Lord Byron had taken care of most of the things that were of most consequence to him, such as letters and papers, which he thought of more consequence than all they had seized; for that he the said Lord Byron had before left them with several of

his friends to be taken care of for him; some with Mr. Hobhouse, others with Mrs. Leigh, and others with Mr. Dallas, meaning the above-named defendant, Robert Charles Dallas, at the same time saying to deponent, ‘ You know Mr. Dallas, he who used so often to call on me,’ or to that effect.”

To this assertion Fletcher adds his opinion and impression, that in speaking of the letters and papers so left in the care of Mr. Dallas, Lord Byron spoke of them as his own property, and did not convey to Fletcher’s mind any notion that he had given them to Mr. Dallas.

It was really necessary that Fletcher should have sworn to his impression and opinion, as to the proprietor of the papers so left, for, from the subject of the conversation, in the course of which they were casually mentioned, it seems doubtful whether Fletcher did not think Lord Byron meant that they were his (Fletcher’s) property, to make up for the loss of the articles seized by his lordship’s creditors. This interpretation however would militate against Mr. Hobhouse’s affidavit, where

he swears that Lord Byron never meant the letters to be published, as the only value they could have been to Fletcher would be from the “valuable consideration” which he might obtain for their publication.

But no ; this was not Fletcher’s idea of the matter. He understood that whatever papers Lord Byron left with Mr. Dallas were left for safe custody, because, as Mr. Hobhouse says, he was going to leave England.

It is somewhat singular that leaving papers and letters, several boxes containing great quantities of them, as is afterwards sworn, which he considered of more consequence than the goods and chattels of which his creditors had deprived him, with Mr. Hobhouse and Mrs. Leigh, Lord Byron should have selected *a very small bundle* of particular letters, and left them, and them only, in the charge of another person nearly two years before he went abroad. So small and particular a selection from the great mass of his papers seems strange, unless, having high value for them, he did not consider that which was *safe*

custody for his other papers was *safe custody* for these. But there is a stranger circumstance, too, which under the supposition that the letters were so left for special safe custody when he was going abroad, is not only strange but absolutely unaccountable. In the autumn of the same year, 1814, on which this sacred deposit was supposed to be made, and only a few months after, the person to whom this precious charge was given, took the very step, the intention of doing which is said to have produced the deposit. He left the country and went abroad; and on the day before he set off from London, in conversation with Lord Byron, he told him that his object in then going, was to seek the most eligible place for a future residence for himself and his family abroad. Yet did nothing pass upon the subject of such a deposit. A communication took place between them, when Mr. Dallas was at Bordeaux, in Dec. 1814. And when, in March, 1815, the return of Buonaparte to France brought him home again, he visited Lord Byron as before; yet did nothing pass upon the subject of

such a deposit. At the end of the year 1815, Mr. Dallas took his family abroad and settled in Normandy, taking with him the letters which Lord Byron had made him a present of. Lord Byron knew of this second going abroad, and heard from Mr. Dallas when he had fixed upon his place of residence; yet did nothing pass upon the subject of such a deposit.

But to come nearer to the time mentioned in Fletcher's affidavit, that in which his conversation occurred with Lord Byron. In the beginning of the very same year, 1816, his lordship, being then about to leave England, himself proposed to Mr. Dallas's son, (the Editor who now writes this narrative,) to accompany him in his travels. A long conversation took place upon the subject, in which Mr. Dallas was mentioned; and perhaps the Editor will be pardoned, under the present circumstances, for adding that he was mentioned by Lord Byron with a grateful feeling, as "one of his oldest and best friends." His place of residence was referred to; and yet not one word passed that had the least reference to

any deposit of papers or letters as having been made to him. If Lord Byron had given valuable papers in charge to Mr. Dallas for safe custody, when his lordship was going abroad, would it not have been natural that he should resume them when he found that the person with whom he had deposited them was himself in the situation which had induced him to put them out of his own custody? And when in fact he was leaving the country, in conversing with Mr. Dallas's son would he not most probably have mentioned the circumstance, as a remembrance or as a renewal of the charge, if even he had not thought fit to resume it? If therefore Fletcher's remembrance of a very casual remark at the distance of eight years be correct, it is more reasonable to suppose that Lord Byron spoke loosely, recollecting merely the literary communication he had so long had with Mr. Dallas, than to place such an incidental remark against the body of circumstantial evidence which has been brought to prove the gift of these letters to Mr. Dallas.

The next affidavit is really ludicrous ; it is sworn by the Honourable Leicester Stanhope; and begins by stating “ that for several *months* prior, and down to the time of Lord Byron’s death, which happened on the 19th of April last at Missolonghi, *an intimacy* subsisted between him, the deponent, and the said Lord Byron.” It is truly absurd to see how all Lord Byron’s *monthly* friends prostitute the word *intimacy*. The reporter of his Lordship’s Conversations, lately published, is a remarkable instance of this, and the present affidavit is no less so ; it shall be given to the reader in Mr. Stanhope’s own words. The honourable deponent goes on thus :—

“ Saith, that about three months before said Lord Byron’s death, he, deponent, held a conversation with said Lord Byron, touching the events of his Lordship’s life, and the publication thereof at a future period; and, upon that occasion, said Lord Byron, in talking to him, deponent, of certain persons who, he said, were in possession of the requisite information for writing

a Memoir, or History of his, said Lord Byron's, Life, he, said Lord Byron, made no allusion whatsoever to the defendant, Robert Charles Dallas, or to any Memoir, or History of his Lordship, or the events of his life, preparing, or prepared by him, said Robert Charles Dallas; but, on the contrary, said Lord Byron, in the course of the conversation above alluded to, named two individuals by name, as being the most competent to write the History, or Memoir, of his life, neither of whom was said Robert Charles Dallas.

"Saith, that said Lord Byron never, in conversation which deponent so had with him as aforesaid, or in any other conversation which he, deponent, had with said Lord Byron, ever mentioned, or alluded, to the name of said Robert Charles Dallas, or intimated, or conveyed, to deponent, that he, said Lord Byron, knew that said Robert Charles Dallas had any intention of publishing any Memoir, or History, or Life of his Lordship, or that he had given said Robert Charles Dallas any permission to write or publish any thing concerning said

Lord Byron, or any letters written by him, said Lord Byron, and which deponent thinks it extremely probable said Lord Byron would have done had he possessed any knowledge of said Robert Charles Dallas's intention to publish any thing concerning him, said Lord Byron, and more particularly if said Lord Byron had given said Robert Charles Dallas any consent or permission so to do."

The Honourable Leicester Stanhope's idea of the necessary communicativeness of a few months *intimacy* is somewhat new, and will, of course, have sufficient weight to prevent any but the two persons who are properly qualified from writing any thing about Lord Byron.

After this Mr. Hobhouse appears again to aver, in an affidavit, "that for the space of seventeen years previous, and down to the time of the death of the above-named Lord Byron, which happened about the 19th of April last, he was upon terms of the closest intimacy and friendship with Lord Byron; and, during the years 1814

and 1815, he associated much with Lord Byron, and was in the habit of corresponding with Lord Byron from the time he last left England, which was in the month of April, 1816; and the deponent declares that upon Lord Byron's going abroad, his Lordship left in his hands, and under his care, several boxes, containing great quantities of private letters and papers, which he desired deponent to take care of for him during his absence from England." He goes on to swear, " That Lord Byron did also, previous to his so going abroad, as deponent believes, leave quantities of letters and papers of a private nature, with others of his friends in England for safe custody, and to be taken care of for him. And, that Lord Byron, for many years previous to his so going abroad, as aforesaid, was in the habit of imparting his private concerns and transactions to him, but that Lord Byron never told him, or gave him, in any manner, to understand, that he had presented, or given, any letters whatsoever to R. C. Dallas, for his own use, or benefit, or to be published."

If this assertion is good for any thing,

is good to prove Lord Byron did not leave the letters with Mr. Dallas *for safe custody*; for, if in the course of such confidential communication, as is here described, his Lordship never mentioned to Mr. Hobhouse having done so, even while placing large quantities of papers in his own hands for safe custody, when it would have been so very natural to refer to the circumstance, the inference is strong that no such circumstance took place. If Lord Byron had mentioned to Mr. Hobhouse having so done, he certainly would have sworn to that fact, when, from the paucity of positive information, he was reduced to the necessity of swearing to suppositions, as has been shewn. The case, therefore, stands thus: Mr. Hobhouse *does swear* that Lord Byron did *not* tell him that he had given the letters to Mr. Dallas; and Mr. Hobhouse *does not swear* that Lord Byron told him he had left them for safe custody with Mr. Dallas; the one proves one fact at least, as much as the other proves the other, and, therefore, in this debtor and creditor account of the affidavit the balance is **NOTHING.**

Mr. Hobhouse ends his affidavit by swearing "that Lord Byron had it in contemplation, to the knowledge of the deponent, to go abroad about June, 1814, and had actually made preparations for such his last-mentioned journey, and that the deponent had agreed to accompany him, but that Lord Byron afterwards altered his intention, and did not go."

This point also forms the opening assertion of the next deponent, the Honourable Augusta Mary Leigh, the half sister of the late Lord Byron. She states that she well remembers that Lord Byron did, about June, 1814, make preparations, and then had it in contemplation to go abroad, but that he did not then go abroad as he had contemplated and intended.

When a lady swears merely to her remembrance, she may very innocently make a mistake in a year, especially after the lapse of ten years since the circumstance took place. But, in this case, Mr. Hobhouse swears "*to the knowledge of the deponent,*" therefore we are bound, not only to believe what he asserts, but to under-

stand, that previous to so positive an assertion upon a point where the difference of time makes *all* the difference in the matter, he must have consulted any memorandums he may have made, referred to pocket-books or letters, so as to convince himself from some more tangible data than that furnished by memory, that it really was "*about June, 1814*," and not "*about June, 1813*," that the intention of going abroad existed in Lord Byron's mind.

These observations have arisen from a singular coincidence. Amongst the late Mr. Dallas's papers the Editor has found a printed catalogue of books belonging to Lord Byron, to be sold. The Editor has frequently before seen this catalogue, and been informed by Mr. Dallas that it referred to an intended sale of Lord Byron's library, which was to have taken place in consequence of his intention to go abroad; but that he altered his intention before the day of sale, though after the announcement, and that consequently the books were saved from the hammer. The catalogue is curious, as many of the books were presenta-

tion copies, given to his Lordship by the authors, with their autographs in them; but its particular curiosity is from its containing the following description of two lots:

Lot 151 A silver sepulchral urn, made with great taste. Within it are contained human bones, taken from a tomb within the long wall of Athens, in the month of February, 1811. The urn weighs 187 oz. 5 dwt.

Lot 152 A silver cup, containing
“ Root of hemlock gathered in the dark,”
according to the direction of the witches in
Macbeth. The hemlock was plucked at
Athens by the noble proprietor, in 1811.—
The silver cup weighs 29oz. 8dwts.

The title-page of this catalogue is as follows:—“ A catalogue of books, the property of a nobleman *ABOUT to leave England on a tour to the Morea*. To which are added a silver sepulchral urn, containing relics brought from Athens, in 1811; and a silver cup, the property of the same noble person; which will be sold by auction by R. H. Evans, at his house, No. 26, Pall Mall, on Thursday, July 8th, and the following day. Catalogues to be had, and the books viewed at the place of sale.”

So far this all corroborates the statement made in the two affidavits under consideration, that Lord Byron intended to go abroad, and made preparations to that effect, *about June*—for it is to be supposed that the 8th of July may fairly come within the interpretation of that phrase*. There is, however, a generally neglected part of the title page, which happened to catch the Editor's eye on reading it over; it is the date following the printer's name, which runs thus, “*Printed by W. Bulmer and Co. Cleveland-row, St. James's, 1813.*” This may possibly be a typographical error, and this sale of books may really have been a part of the preparation for going abroad, which Mr. Hobhouse and Mrs. Leigh swear was made by Lord Byron, in 1814; or should the date of this catalogue be correct, probably Lord Byron made an *annual preparation* for leaving England *about June*. If any reader happens to know of a similar preparation made by Lord Byron, about

* The gift of the letters to Mr. Dallas was made by Lord Byron, on the 10th of June, 1814, in performance of a promise made in April, 1812.

June, in the year 1812, or about June, in the year 1815, the chain of preparations between his first return about June, in 1811, and his second departure, about June, 1816, will be established, and the fact of the two preparations before referred to will be strongly corroborated.

The object of Mr. Hobhouse and Mrs. Leigh is to establish their statement, that Lord Byron placed the letters in question with Mr. Dallas, for safe custody, "*being about to leave the country.*" That statement would altogether fall to the ground if Lord Byron's intention to go abroad was in June, 1813, as he gave the letters in June 1814, a twelvemonth after he had abandoned his intention, having promised to give one of them in April, 1812, a twelvemonth before he formed his intention. It is, therefore, to be regretted, as there is proof in print that the intention to leave the country was in 1813, that Mr. Hobhouse, in his affidavit concerning his *knowledge* of the fact, did not mention or allude to some of the tangible data, upon which he doubtless established that know-

ledge in his own mind, instead of resting altogether upon the corroborative *remembrance* of Mrs. Leigh.

Mrs. Leigh, by her affidavit, further presents, upon oath, a debtor and creditor account, similar to that which Mr. Hobhouse had already exhibited respecting the fact of Lord Byron's never having mentioned either the delivery for safe custody, or the gift of the disputed letters. This account having been sufficiently audited in the former case, it is only necessary to state in the present, that a similar examination of it leads to a similar conclusion that the balance is **NOTHING**.

This honourable lady, upon her oath, declares also, that she "believes that such letters were left or deposited, by Lord Byron, in the care or keeping of R. C. Dallas, for the use of him, the said Lord Byron, in the same manner as his Lordship left such other letters and papers with deponent and others of his friends"—that is to say, she swears that she does not believe Mr. Dallas's assertion upon oath, which she must have seen, as these affidavits

were filed in answer to it. Mr. Dallas felt it unnecessary to give himself the pain of positively contradicting the *belief* sworn to in this affidavit. But the Editor refers the reader to the whole of the foregoing observations, that he may form his opinion as to the grounds upon which the contradiction might have been given.

The Editor's task is now drawing to a close. After a considerable, though unavoidable delay, arising from the mass of business which peremptorily occupied the attention of the Court of Chancery, on the very last day of the Lord Chancellor's public sittings, an attempt was made to bring on the consideration of the cause, Hobhouse *v.* Dallas, out of its proper rotation. This was resisted; but Lord Eldon being informed of the pressing nature of the business, kindly consented to take the papers to his house, and without calling for the arguments of counsel, gave his decision at a private sitting.* Accordingly, on the

* It is owing to this circumstance that no report of the cause has appeared in the public papers.

23d of August, 1824, the Lord Chancellor delivered the following judgment in his private room. It is copied literally from the short-hand writer's notes.

“ **LORD CHANCELLOR.**—In the case of Hobhouse and Dallas, I shall reserve my judgment on one point till Wednesday, because I think it an extremely difficult point. But upon the point, whether this gentleman can publish the letters that Lord Byron wrote to himself, I cannot say that it is possible for him to be allowed to do that. I apprehend the law, as it has been settled with respect to letters—the property in letters is, (and whether that was a decision that could very well have stood at first or not, I will not undertake to say, but it is so settled, therefore I do not think I ought to trouble myself at all about it,) that if A. writes a letter to B., B. has the property in that letter, for the purpose of reading and keeping it, but no property in it to publish it; and, therefore, the consequence of that is, that unless the point which relates to the letters that were written by Lord

Byron to his mother is a point that can be extended to the letters written by Lord Byron to this gentleman himself,—unless the point on the first case affect the point on the second, it appears to me that the letters written to himself clearly fall within that rule which I am now alluding to.

“ The other is a thing which, after carefully reading the bill, and answers of these gentlemen who propose to be the publishers, I have formed an inclination of opinion about it, but which I will not at this moment express, because I think that opinion must be wrong, unless it is founded on every word that is to be found in all the answer relative to the transaction of Lord Byron’s putting these letters into the hands of Mr. Dallas. That is a point on which I would rather reserve my opinion till Wednesday morning, and then I will conclude it with respect to that question. With respect to the letters written to himself, I confess I entertain no doubt at all about it. And there is another circumstance too, I think, which is, that it is a very different thing with respect to letters written by Lord Byron to his mother—it is

a very different thing, as it appears to me, publishing as information what those letters may have communicated as matters of fact, and publishing the letters themselves. If you are here on Wednesday morning, I will give you my judgment on the point which I have reserved, and if you are not here, I will give it on Saturday."

"COUNSEL.—Then of course the injunction continues as to the letters written to Mr. Dallas himself?"

"LORD CHANCELLOR.—Yes; and with respect to the others that will stand over till Wednesday. I don't see if an action was brought against Mr. Dallas for publishing the other letters, I don't see how he could defend that action; for the question about the other letters depends entirely, I think, on what is supposed to have passed between himself and Lord Byron alone; and, therefore, if an action was brought against him, there could be no evidence at all that would take his case out of the reach of the law."

These are the words of the Lord Chancellor's decision as far as it goes. Nothing

took place on the Wednesday with respect to the reserved point ; but his Lordship left town on the following Monday, and previously to so doing, he desired the Registrar of the Court to inform Mr. Dallas's solicitor, that " the injunction must remain in all its points."

That no step might be omitted which could by possibility enable Mr. Dallas to redeem the pledge which he had given to the public, the following letter was sent to the executors by the parties restrained, by the injunction of the Court of Chancery, from publishing the letters in question.

" To the Executors of the late Right Honourable
Lord Byron.

" *London, 24th of September, 1824.*

" GENTLEMEN,

" As the Lord Chancellor has given his opinion that the Letters of the late Lord Byron, contained in the work which we intended to publish, cannot be made public without the permission of his Lordship's executors, we beg to state to you, that the work in question has been perused by the present Lord Byron, who has expressed his approbation of it, and his desire that it should appear ; and we now request the permission of the executors for its publication, declaring, at

the same time, our readiness to submit the work to the inspection of any person to be mutually approved of by both parties in this transaction ; and if any omissions should be suggested to make all such as, upon a fair examination, may be considered proper.

“ The favour of an immediate answer is requested, addressed under cover to our solicitors, Messrs. S. Turner and Son, Red Lion-square.

“ We remain, gentlemen,

“ Your most obedient servants,

“ ALEX. R. C. DALLAS, for R. C. DALLAS,

“ CHARLES KNIGHT, for myself,

and HENRY COLBURN.”

In consequence of this letter written by the parties to the executors themselves, Messrs. Turner and Son, the solicitors to those parties, received the following letter, without a date, from Mr. Charles Hanson, the solicitor to the executors :—

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ *Hobhouse and another v. Dallas and others.*

“ I AM directed by the executors of the late Lord Byron, in answer to a letter addressed to them by your clients, containing a proposal for the publication of the late Lord Byron’s letters in the work in question, to inform you, that the executors do not deem it proper to sanction the publication of any of Lord Byron’s letters ; and that they are advised to pursue legal mea-

sures to compel the delivering up to them such of the letters as they are entitled as his representatives to possess. It has been represented to the executors that a publication of the letters in question has been contemplated abroad. The executors do not vouch for the truth of this report ; but I think it proper to mention, that if such a thing should be done, it will be deemed by the executors a contempt of the Injunction granted in this cause.

“ I am, &c.

“ CHAS. HANSON.”

This letter having closed every possible avenue by which the correspondence could be given to the British public, as had been promised, Mr. Dallas was placed in the situation which was stated at the beginning of this narrative ; and there was no alternative left to him but the step which has now been taken. The following RECOLLECTIONS will, it is hoped, sufficiently establish the propriety of the intended publication as far as relates to the *nature of its contents* ; this statement is now given to the public with a view to prove the propriety of Mr. Dallas’s intention and conduct in promising its publication ; and the existence of the

injunction relieves him from all blame in not performing his promise.

After the full statement that has been made, it will not be necessary to detain the reader much longer from the perusal of the Recollections themselves. There are, however, three points to which the Editor begs to draw attention :—The first is the difference between the words “*private*” and “*confidential*. ” The parties who oppose the publication of the correspondence made use of them as synonymous ; against this use of them, the parties who intended the publication distinctly protest. The *private letters* of a *public man* are those in which, unrestrained by the *present* intention of publication to the world, he naturally and inartificially conveys his thoughts, sentiments, and opinions to a friend. Can it be said that when a man’s celebrity has raised him from his peculiar circle to belong to the unlimited one of all mankind, and when his death has made him the subject of history, and rendered the development of his character interesting to all the world, it is a

breach of confidence to give to the world such *private* letters so written? *Confidential letters* are those in which any man intrusts that which at the time he would not make known, to the keeping and secrecy of one in whom he confides. Such letters, it is a breach of confidence, and highly dishonourable, to publish. The editor submits these definitions to the criticism of the public; and by them he wishes the matter in question to be tried. Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson, *without ever having read one word of the letters* proposed to be published, swear, that they **ARE** confidential, and that the publication of them would be a breach of honour and confidence. Mr. Dallas, Mr. Spearman, Mr. Knight, and the present Editor, *after having carefully read over all the letters*, swear, that they **ARE NOT** confidential. Mr. Dallas not only acknowledges that they are *private*, according to the above definition, but he publishes them *because* they are so; if they were not they would not be worth publishing now. But had they been *confidential*, no inducement on earth would have prevailed with

Mr. Dallas to submit them to the inspection of any third person whatever, much less to publish them.

The second point to be attended to is the reluctance of Mr. Dallas to submit the correspondence to the inspection of the executors, with a view to their decision on its publication. This point has been already incidentally touched upon; but a few more observations may, perhaps, be pardonable. Mr. Dallas never denied the right of an executor to prevent the posthumous publication of letters which were either libellous, or injurious to the deceased, or otherwise improper for publication ; but, without adverting to the legal question, he did deny that persons differing from an author in opinions respecting religion, morality, politics, and patriotism, ought to have unlimited control, and the power of an unalterable *veto*, over a work, in which those subjects were more or less discussed. For this reason he refused to submit the work in question to Messrs. Hobhouse and Hanson, because, as far as he knew, or had heard of either, he had grounds for

believing that he differed materially from them both on one or other of those points. But when a third person was mentioned, to whom the book might be submitted, the greatest readiness was shown to make an amicable arrangement ; and the proposition contained in the final letter to the executors, is exactly the same as was made in a previous stage of the business through the present Lord Byron.

The third point to be mentioned is that, after reading this narrative, it cannot but be painful to be forced to the conviction that the opposition of the executors amounts, by their own confession in the affidavits, to a *matter of property* only. They cannot venture to say, in the face of all the evidence adduced as to the nature of the work, that they oppose its publication in tenderness to Lord Byron's character; they know it is more likely to exalt his character, as far as it may be exalted, than any other work that can be written; they know that those who most desire to see Lord Byron's character placed, if possible, in a better light than it stands

at present, approve of the work, and wish it to be made public. Neither can they venture to say that they fear to allow this correspondence to appear, lest it should be taken as a precedent, and other letters less proper should afterwards come forth; for they have the power offered to them of sanctioning the work in the title page by their "permission," which would leave them at liberty to resist any *unsanctioned* publication. They, therefore, are forced to acknowledge, as they do in the course of these proceedings, that their opposition is *a matter of property*,—that is to say, that they want to make the most of these letters for the benefit of the late Lord Byron's legatee *.

* It is hardly possible to be believed that all these oaths, as of knowledge upon surmisings, have for their object to add a few hundreds to the hundred thousand of pounds that Lord Byron has stripped from an ancient and honourable title which they were meant to support—not to give to his daughter, which would have put the silence of feeling upon the reproach of justice, but to enrich his sister *of the half blood*, she being married, and of course naturally bound only to expect and to follow the fortunes of her husband.

No one, under all the circumstances, can doubt, morally speaking, that Lord Byron made a free gift to Mr. Dallas of his mother's letters. Other proof than that which can now be given might, perhaps, be necessary to satisfy the requirements of law; but, certainly, the oaths that have been sworn are not calculated to remove the moral conviction from the mind, that the letters are the property of Mr. Dallas. As it is not according to the rules of law that matters of feeling are decided, there is a circumstance, of no slight importance, which should be taken into consideration in forming an opinion upon this transaction. For many years of his life Lord Byron never saw Mrs. Leigh, and would have no communication with her; he was averse to the society of the sex, and thought lightly of family ties. This separation continued from his boyhood up to the year 1812; during the latter part of which period Mr. Dallas, continually, but fruitlessly, endeavoured to induce Lord Byron to take notice of Mrs. Leigh. However, after his return to England, when the publication of *Childe*

Harold was approaching, his arguments were urged with more force, and Lord Byron, at length, yielded to them. The gift of an early copy of the *Pilgrimage* was one of the first steps towards a renewal of intercourse; and the kind and affectionate terms in which that gift was expressed, as mentioned in the following Recollections, were the result of feelings which Mr. Dallas had endeavoured to excite. That gentleman, during his life time, never took merit to himself for promoting this union, though he has frequently mentioned the circumstances to the Editor, who now makes use of them without having been entrusted to do so; but, impelled by the necessity of vindicating his father under the unexpected treatment he has experienced*.

* The result of this union, *so produced*, has been, that Lord Byron, against all *moral* right, has applied the money procured by the sale of Newstead Abbey, to enrich his half sister, and left the family title without the family estate which belonged to it. It may be said against all *moral* right, because the grant of Newstead was made by Henry VIII., to his ancestor, as the representative, at that time, of a very ancient and honourable family, which was afterwards ennobled by James I.,

The Lord Chancellor's decision sets the question of law at rest; and the Editor is anxious distinctly to state, that neither Mr. Dallas nor himself have ever presumed to call in question the soundness of an opinion given by the venerable Lord Eldon. Neither of them, indeed, had taken the legal view of the subject, which his Lordship appears to have entertained; and they were warranted in bringing the matter to

having the estate, as well as that of Rochdale, in possession, to support the title so given. Lord Byron received this title and estate together *in collateral descent*, he being the grand nephew only of his predecessor. The law which destroyed the perpetuity of entails could not destroy the feeling which makes a man morally bound to transmit such honours and such an estate together to his successors; and had Lord Byron's grand uncle sold Newstead and Rochdale, because he had no son, nor even brother, nor nephew, nor *cousin*, to succeed him, but only a grand nephew, his Lordship would have been the first to have felt the moral injustice done him. Lord Byron is succeeded in a nearer relationship than that in which he stood to his predecessor; yet he leaves a title and a name distinguished in almost every generation, from the conquest, without any of the rewards which were given to the successive bearers of that name, to support its ancient honours.

an issue, by the opinion of one of the most deservedly celebrated lawyers at the Chancery Bar. Without such an opinion, they certainly would not have added the heavy expenses of a Chancery Suit, to the already considerable loss occasioned by the nearly completed preparations for publishing a large edition of the work in quarto. It is particularly necessary, thus publicly to declare an humble submission to the authority of the Court of Chancery, as the appearance of the work in France may induce a supposition that the Author and Editor could be guilty of an *intentional* contempt of that Court. To prevent such a supposition, which would be very far from the truth, the Editor has only to declare, that the arrangements for publication with Messrs. A. and W. Galignani, of Paris, were made by Mr. Dallas, not only before the matter was decided; but that the foundation of those arrangements was laid before the work was offered to any bookseller in London. To this fact the following letter will bear testimony:—

“ To Messrs. A. and W. Galignani, Paris.

“ *Ste. Adresse, near Havre de Grace, May 31, 1824.*

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ You may, perhaps, remember my calling at your house when I was in Paris some time ago. I write at present to inform you, that I have some very interesting manuscripts of Lord Byron’s, which I am going to publish in London, where I purpose to send them as soon as they are copied. I am not decided as to disposing of the copyright; but whether I do or not, I mean to offer them to a Paris publisher for a translation, so that the French and English editions may appear at the same time. I offer you the preference; but I beg an immediate answer, as I mean, if you decline the offer, to write to a friend in Paris to treat with another respectable bookseller.

“ With regard to the interest of the work, you cannot, it is true, judge of that without a more particular communication; but all I wish at present to know is, whether you would enter into this speculation, if the manuscripts prove to possess great interest. I would give you a sight of them, if the distance between us did not prevent it, but in the course of this week they go to London.

“ When I was in Paris, I gave you a print of Lord Byron. It was much soiled, but certainly the best likeness I have seen of him. You purposed having a reduced engraving made of it—did you get it done?

“ I am, gentlemen,

“ Your humble servant,

“ R. C. DALLAS.”

After arranging for the publication in England, Mr. Dallas returned without loss of time to France. At Paris, he entered into a written agreement with Messrs. Galignani, according to the terms of which the sheets were transmitted to them, as they were struck off in London. Mr. Dallas himself remained in Paris to conduct the work through the press; and it had nearly advanced as far as the edition in England, when the progress of both was arrested by the Injunction. Mr. Dallas has been under the necessity of abiding by the pecuniary loss to a large amount, which the advanced state of the work, when stopped, brings upon him in England; but this very fact is a reason why he should be unable to meet a similar loss to nearly a similar amount in France. And not only were the actual expenses incurred to be considered, but, by suppressing the work in Paris, he would have been liable to the consequences of a law-suit upon his formal contract there also. Mr. Dallas, therefore, was left without a reasonable alternative,

and the arrangements with Messrs. Galignani have been allowed to proceed; and this the more necessarily, as from the number of hands through which the manuscript had passed, and the copies of it which had been dispersed for translation and other literary purposes, it was impossible to guard against the almost certain appearance of the work in part, or in the whole, however unsanctioned by the approbation of the Editor. In these arrangements with Messrs. Galignani, Mr. Knight and Mr. Colburn were not, and are not, in any respect parties;—the right of such publication having been reserved to Mr. Dallas in the original agreement.

Topics in the original lecture

N O T E.

As, in the first page of this work, it is asserted that Lord Byron was born at Dover, and as the public newspapers stated that, in the inscription on the urn which contained his Lordship's relics it was said that he was born in London, the Editor thinks it right to publish the extract of a letter to himself, from the Author of the following Recollections, in which his reasons for making the assertion are stated:—

“ I find in the newspapers that Lord Byron is stated *on the urn* to have been born in London. The year previous to the January when he was born, I was on a visit to Captain Byron and my sister at Chantilly. Lord Byron's father and mother, with Mrs. Leigh, then Augusta Byron, a child then about four years old, were in France. I returned to Boulogne, where I then had a house, where I was visited by Mrs. Byron, in her way to England; she was pregnant, and stopped at Dover on crossing the Channel. That Lord Byron was born there I recollect being mentioned both by his uncle and my sister, and I am so fully persuaded of it (Capt. Byron and my sister soon followed, and staid some time at Folkstone), that I cannot even now give full credit to the contrary, and half suspect that his mother might have had him christened in London, and thus given ground for a mistake.”

ERRATA.

- P. 38, line 10, for "age" read "page."
138, —— 13, for "breach" read "beach."
174, —— 12, for "do" read "no."

RECOLLECTIONS
OF THE
LIFE OF LORD BYRON.

CHAPTER I.

CONNEXION AND FIRST PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE WITH LORD BYRON.

LORD BYRON was a nephew of the late Captain George Anson Byron, of the Royal Navy, who was married to my sister, Henrietta Charlotte. In consequence of this connexion I was well acquainted with Lord Byron's father and mother. The former, whose name was John, died at Valenciennes not long after the birth of his son, which took place at Dover, 22d January, 1788; the latter went with her child into Scotland, and I lost sight of them for many years.

I heard of him when a boy at De Loyauté's Academy, and afterwards, on the death of the old Lord, his grand uncle, when he was placed at Harrow. Captain Byron and my sister were then both dead, and I saw little of the Byron family for several years.

Lord Byron was called George, after his uncle, who was his godfather: the name of Gordon had been assumed by his father in compliance with a condition imposed by will on the husband of Miss Gordon, the maiden name of his mother, and on the representatives of her family.

At the end of the year 1807, some of my family observed in the newspapers extracts from Lord Byron's Juvenile Poems, which he had published under the title of *Hours of Idleness*. I ordered the volume, which I received on the 27th of December. I read it with great pleasure; and, if it is not saying too much for my own judgment, discerned in it marks of the genius which

has been since so universally acknowledged. Though sensible of some personal gratification from this proof of superior talents breaking forth in the nephew of my friend and brother, it did not enter my mind to make it the occasion of seeking the author, till I was urged to compliment him upon his publication, which I did in the following letter, dated January 6th, 1808:—

“ My LORD,

“ Your Poems were sent to me a few days ago. I have read them with more pleasure than I can express, and I feel myself irresistibly impelled to pay you a tribute on the effusions of a noble mind in strains so truly poetic. Lest, however, such a tribute from a stranger should appear either romantic or indecorous, let me inform your Lordship that the name of Byron is extremely dear to me, and that

for some portion of my life I was intimately connected with, and enjoyed the friendship of, a near relation of yours, who had begun to reflect new lustre on it, and who, had he lived, would have added a large share of laurels to those which your Muse so sweetly commemorates; I mean your father's brother, through whom I also knew your father and mother.

Your Poems, my Lord, are not only beautiful as compositions ;—they bespeak a heart glowing with honour, and attuned to virtue, which is infinitely the higher praise. Your addresses to Newstead Abbey, a place about which I have often conversed with your uncle, are in the true spirit of chivalry ; and the following lines are in a spirit still more sublime :

‘ I will not complain, and though chill’d is affection,
With me no corroding resentment shall live ;
My bosom is calm’d by the simple reflection
That both may be wrong, and that both should
forgive.’

A spirit that brings to my mind another noble author, who was not only a fine poet, orator, and historian, but one of the closest reasoners we have on the truth of that religion of which forgiveness is a prominent principle; the great and the good Lord Lyttelton, whose fame will never die. His son, to whom he had transmitted genius but not virtue, sparkled for a moment, and went out like a falling star, and with him the title became extinct. He was the victim of inordinate passions, and he will be heard of in this world only by those who read the English Peerage. The lines which I have just cited, and the sentiments that pervade your volume, sufficiently indicate the affinity of your mind with the former; and I have no doubt that like him you will reflect more honour on the Peerage than the Peerage on you.

I wish, my Lord, that it had been within your plan, and that you had been permitted

to insert among your poems the verses from your friend complaining of the warmth of your descriptions. They must have been much to his honour; and, from the general sentiments of your reply, I think your Lordship will not long continue of an opinion you express in it: I mean, that you will not always consider the strength of virtue in some, and the downhill career of other young women, as rendering the perusal of very lively descriptions a matter of indifference. Those whom education and early habits have made strong, and those whom neglected nurseries or corrupt schools have rendered weak, are, perhaps, few compared to the number that are for a time undecided characters; that is, who have not been advanced to the adamantine rock of purity by advice and by example; nor, on the other hand, are yet arrived at the steep pitch of descent where their progress cannot be arrested, but are still within the influence

of impressions. Rousseau acknowledges the danger of warm descriptions, in the front of a book in which that danger is pushed to its utmost extent ; and, at the same time, with his usual paradoxical inconsistency, says it will not be his fault that certain ruin ensues, for good girls should not read novels. I have not the *Nouvelle Héloïse* by me, but I translate the passage from an *Essay on Romances* by Marmontel : ‘ No chaste young woman,’ says Rousseau, ‘ ever reads novels, and I have given this a title sufficiently expressive to show, on opening it, what is to be expected. She who, in spite of that title, shall dare to read a single page of it is *a lost young woman*: but let her not impute her ruin to this book ; the mischief was done before, and as she has begun let her read to the end ; she has nothing more to risk.*.’ On this Marmontel asks if the

* “ Jamais fille chaste n'a lu des romans, et j'ai mis à celle ci un titre assez décidé, pour qu'en l'ouvrant on sût

title, *LETTERS OF TWO LOVERS*, is a bugbear, and adds: ‘ shall he who puts sweet poison in the reach of children say, if they poison themselves, that he is not to be blamed for it?’

Having perhaps already trespassed too much on your time, I will not pursue this subject further, but content myself with referring your Lordship to the Essay which I have cited for an admirable critique on Rousseau’s Novel. It is printed with Marmontel’s other works.

And now, my Lord, shall I conclude with an apology for my letter? If I thought one necessary I would burn it: yet I should feel myself both delighted and honoured if I were sure your Lordship would be better pleased with its being put into the post than

à quoi s’en tenir. Celle qui, malgré ce titre, en osera lire une page est une fille perdue: mais qu’elle n’impute point sa perte à ce livre; le mal étoit fait d’avance. Puisqu’elle a commencé, qu’elle achève de lire: elle n’a plus rien à risquer.”

into the fire. Most sincerely do I wish you success in those pursuits to which I conceive you allude in your preface; and I congratulate you that, at so early a period of your life, and in spite of being a favourite of the Muses, you feel yourself born for your country."

Lord Byron conveyed to me in a flattering manner the pleasure which he had received from this letter, as far as it contained a tribute to his muse, but declared that he must in candour decline such praise as he did not deserve, and that therefore, with respect to his virtue, he could not accept of my applause. He was forcibly struck with the manner in which I had alluded to the two Lords Lyttelton with reference to himself, as he had frequently been compared to the latter. The events of his short life had been singular, and had had the effect of causing him to be held up as the votary of licenti-

ousness, and the disciple of infidelity; though in this respect he felt he was made out to be worse than he really was. He mentioned to me some of the Reviews in which his little volume had been noticed; and, intimating that my name and connexion with his family had long been known to him, expressed a pleasing desire of a personal acquaintance.

This communication, while it highly gratified me, was calculated to excite a strong desire to know more of the character and feelings of a young man who evinced so much genius, and who gave such an account of the results of a life which had not yet occupied twenty years. I immediately expressed my feelings in the following letter, dated January 21, 1808:—

“ I am much indebted to the impulse that incited me to write to you, for the new pleasure it has procured me.

Though your letter has made some alteration in the portrait my imagination had painted, it has in two points heightened it; the candour with which you decline praise you think you do not deserve, and your declaration that you should be happy to merit it, convince me that you have been very injudiciously compared to the last Lord Lyttelton. I own that, from the design you express in your preface of resigning the service of the Muses for a different vocation, I conceived you bent on pursuits which lead to the character of a legislator and statesman. I imagined you at one of the Universities, training yourself to habits of reasoning and eloquence, and storing up a large fund of history and law, preparatory to the time when your rank in society must necessarily open to you an opportunity of gratifying a noble ambition. But I have not taken up the pen to make your Lordship's letter the subject of a sermon: on the

contrary, I am perfectly sensible that if you do indeed need the reform some of your friends think you do, pedantry will never effect it; and though my years and the compliments you pay me might be some excuse for me, the only inclination I feel at present is to express a warm wish that so much candour, good sense, and talent, may lead you to the knowledge of TRUTH, and the enjoyment of REAL HAPPINESS. I write principally to thank you for the honour you intend me by a gift of the new edition of your poems, which I shall be happy to receive; and to say that I mean to avail myself of your expressions relative to a meeting, to pay my compliments to you in Albemarle-street, in the course of a few days.

While the pen is in my hand, I will just say that my mention of Lord Lyttelton to you, who had been compared with him, is singular: but it is no less remarkable that before I was of your age I was anxious to

see him, and went from school to the House of Peers on purpose, when he introduced a bill for licensing a theatre at Manchester, in which I heard him opposed by your relation Lord Carlisle. No, no ; you are not like him—you *shall not* be like him, except in eloquence. Pardon this last effusion."

By the return of the post which took this letter to him I received a reply, professing to give a more particular account of his studies, opinions, and feelings, written in a playful style, and containing rather flippant observations made for the sake of antitheses, than serious remarks intended to convey information. The letter may be considered as characteristic of his prose style in general, possessing the germ of his satire without the bitterness of its maturity, and the pruriency of his wit uncorrected by the hand of experience. Though written in so light and unserious a tone as prevents the

possibility of charging him gravely with the opinions he expresses, still the bent of his mind is perceptible in it; a bent which led him to profess that such were the sentiments of the *wicked* George, Lord Byron.

I considered these expressions of feeling, though evidently grounded on some occurrences in the still earlier part of his life, rather as *jeux d'esprit* than as a true portrait. I called on him on the 24th of January, and was delighted with the interview. In a few days, the 27th, I dined with him, and was more and more pleased with him. I saw nothing to warrant the character he had given of himself; on the contrary, when a young fellow-collegian, who dined with us, introduced a topic on which I did not hesitate to avow my orthodoxy, he very gracefully diverted the conversation from the channel of ridicule which it had begun to take, and partly combated on my side;

though, as I was afterwards convinced, his opinion did not differ from his companion's, who was also a polite gentleman, and did not make me feel the contempt which he, probably, entertained for the blindness of my understanding. After this I saw him frequently, always with new pleasure, but occasionally mixed with pain, as intimacy removed the polite apprehension of offending, and showed me his engrafted opinions of religion. I must say *engrafted*, for I think he was inoculated by the young pridelings of intellect, with whom he associated at the University. In the course of the spring he left town, and I did not see him or hear from him for several months.

In the beginning of the next year, I was agreeably surprised on receiving a note from him, dated January 20th, at Reddish's Hotel, St. James's-street, requesting to see me on the morning of the Sunday following. I did not fail to keep the appointment. It

was his birth-day, (January 22d, 1809,) and that on which he came of age. He was in high spirits ; indeed, so high as to seem to me more flippant on the subject of religion, and on some others, than he had ever appeared before. But he tempered the overflow of his gaiety with good manners and so much kindness, that, far from being inclined to take offence, I felt a hope that by adopting forbearance, I might do him some service in an occasional argument or sentiment : for, although I did not put on solemn looks, I never, for a moment, allowed him to imagine that I could adopt his opinions on sacred points. He talked of the Earl of Carlisle with more than indignation. I had heard him before speak bitterly of that nobleman, whose applause he had courted for his juvenile poetry, and from whom he received a frigid answer, and little attention. But his anger that morning proceeded from another cause. Overcoming,

or rather stifling, the resentment of the poet, he had written to remind the Earl that he should be of age at the commencement of the ensuing Session of Parliament, in expectation of being introduced by him, and, by being presented as his near relation, saved some trouble and awkwardness. A cold reply informed him, technically, of the mode of proceeding ; but nothing more. Extremely nettled, he determined to lash his relation with all the gall he could throw into satire. He declaimed against the ties of consanguinity, and abjured even the society of his sister ; from which he entirely withdrew himself until after the publication of *Childe Harold*, when, at length, he yielded to my persuasions, and made advances towards a friendly intercourse with her. When he had vented his resentment on this subject, he attacked the editor and other writers of the *Edinburgh Review* ; and then told me that, since I last saw him,

he had written a Satire on them, which he wished me to read. He put it into my hands, and I took it home. I was surprised and charmed with the nerve it evinced. I immediately wrote to him upon it, and he requested me to get it published without his name.

CHAPTER II.

PUBLICATION OF "ENGLISH BARDS AND
SCOTCH REVIEWERS."

THE work which Lord Byron thus put into my hands consisted of a number of loose printed sheets in quarto, and was entitled **THE BRITISH BARDS, A SATIRE.** It contained the original groundwork of his well-known poem, such as he had written it at Newstead, where he had caused it to be printed at a country press; and various corrections and annotations appeared upon the margin in his own hand. Some of these are exceedingly curious, as tending to throw a light upon the workings of his mind at that early period of his career. To the poem, as it then stood, he added a hundred and ten

lines in its first progress through the press; and made several alterations, some upon my suggestion, and others upon his own. I wrote to him the following letter, dated January 24, 1809, immediately upon reading it over:—

“ MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

“ I have read your Satire with infinite pleasure, and were you sufficiently acquainted with my mind to be certain that it cannot stoop to flattery, I would tell you that it rivals the Baviad and Mæviad; but, till my praise is of that value, I will not be profuse of it.

I think in general with you of the literary merit of the writers introduced. I am particularly pleased with your distinction in Scott’s character; a man of genius adopting subjects which men of genius will hardly read twice, if they can go through them

once. But, in allowing Mr. Scott to be a man of genius, and agreeing as you must, after the compliments you have paid to Campbell and M'Neil, that he is not the only one Scotland has produced, it will be necessary to sacrifice, or modify, your note relative to the introduction of the kilted goddess, who, after all, in having to kiss such a son as you picture Jeffrey, can be but a spurious germ of divinity.

As you have given me the flattering office of looking over your poem with more than a common reader's eye, I shall scrutinize, and suggest any change I may think advantageous. And, in the first place, I propose to you an alteration of the title. '*The British Bards*' immediately brings to the imagination those who were slain by the first Edward. If you prefer it to the one I am going to offer, at least let the definite article be left out. I would fain, however, have you call the Satire, '*The*

Parish Poor of Parnassus,' which will afford an opportunity for a note of this nature:—
‘ Booksellers have been called the midwives of literature; with how much more propriety may they now be termed overseers of the poor of Parnassus, and keepers of the workhouse of that desolated spot.’

I enclose a few other alterations of passages, straws on the surface, which you would make yourself were you to correct the press.

I will also take the liberty of sending you some two dozen lines, which, if they neither offend your ear nor your judgment, I wish you would adopt, on account of the occasion which has prompted them*. I am acquainted with ***, and, though not on terms of very close intimacy, I know him

* In his answer to this letter Lord Byron declined adopting these lines because they were not his own, quoting at the same time what Lady Wortley Montague said to Pope, “ No touching,—for the good will be given to you, and the bad attributed to me.”

sufficiently to esteem him as a man. He has but a slender income, out of which he manages to support two of his relations. His literary standard is by no means contemptible, and his objects have invariably been good ones. Now, for any author to step out of the common track of criticism to make a victim of such a man by the means of a particular book, made up of unfair ridicule and caricature, for the venal purpose of collecting a few guineas, is not only unworthy of a scholar, but betrays the malignity of a demon. If you think my lines feeble, let your own breast inspire your pen on the occasion, and send me some.

I shall delay the printing as little as possible; but I have some apprehension as to the readiness of my publishers to undertake the sale, for they have a large portion of the work of the Poor of Parnassus to dispose of. I will see them without delay,

and persuade them to it if I can; if not, I will employ some other. Southey is a great favourite of theirs; and I must be ingenuous enough to tell you, that though I have ever disapproved of the absurd attempt to alter, or rather destroy, the harmony of our verse, and found *Joan of Arc* and *Madoc* tedious, I think the power of imagination, though of the marvellous, displayed in *Thalaba*,

‘Arabia’s monstrous, wild, and wondrous son,’
evinces genius.

I see your Muse has given a couplet to your noble relation;—I doubt whether it will not be read as the two severest lines in the Satire, and so, what I could wish avoided for the present, betray the author: which will render abortive a thought that has entered my mind of having the Satire most favourably reviewed in the *Satirist*, which, on its being known afterwards to be

yours, would raise a laugh against your enemies in that quarter. Consider, and tell me, whether the lines shall stand. I agree that there is only *one* among the peers on whom Apollo deigns to smile; but, believe me, that peer is no *relation* of yours.

I am sorry you have not found a place among the genuine Sons of Apollo for Crabbe, who, in spite of something bordering on servility in his dedication, may surely rank with some you have admitted to his temple. And now, before I lay down my pen, I will tell you the passage which gave me the greatest pleasure—that on Little. I am no preacher, but it is very pleasing to read such a confirmation of the opinion I had formed of you; to find you an advocate for keeping a veil over the despotism of the senses. Such poems are far more dangerous to society than Rochester's. In your concluding line on Little, I would,

though in a quotation, substitute, *line*, or *lay*, for *life*:

‘She bids thee mend thy *line* and sin no more*.’

Pray answer as soon as you conveniently can, and believe me ever,” &c. &c.

The couplet to which I referred as having been given by his Muse to his noble relation, was one of panegyric upon Lord Carlisle, at which I was not a little surprised, after what I had so lately heard him say of that nobleman; but the fact is, that the lines were composed before he had written to his Lordship, as mentioned at the end of the last chapter, and he had given me the Satire before he had made any of his meditated alterations. It is, however, curious that this couplet must have been composed in the short interval between his printing the poem at Newstead and his arrival in town, per-

* In the original the words were “mend thy life.” He however adopted the word *line*.

haps under the same feelings which induced him to write to Lord Carlisle, and at the same time. The lines do not appear in the print, but are inserted afterwards in Lord Byron's hand-writing. They are these:—

On one alone Apollo deigns to smile,
And crowns a new Roscommon in Carlisle.

Immediately upon receiving my letter he forwarded four lines to substitute for this couplet.

Roscommon! Sheffield! with your spirits fled,
No future laurels deck a noble head ;
Nor e'en a hackney'd Muse will deign to smile
On minor Byron, or mature Carlisle.

He said that this alteration would answer the purposes of concealment; but it was other feelings than the desire of concealment which induced him afterwards to alter the two last lines into

No more will cheer with renovating smile
The paralytic puling of Carlisle ;

—and to indulge the malice of his Muse
adding these—

The puny school-boy, and his early lay,
We pardon, if his follies pass away.
Who, who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,
Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse.
What heterogeneous honours deck the peer,
Lord, rhymester, petit-maitre, pamphleteer.
So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
His scenes alone might damn our sinking stage;
But managers, for once, cried hold, enough!
Nor drugged their audience with the tragic stuff.

Yet at the {^{fiat}
judgment } let his lordship laugh,
nausea*
And case his volumes in congenial calf.
Yes! doff that covering where morocco shines,
“ And hang a calf skin on those recreant” lines.

This passage, together with the two notes which accompanied it in the publication of the Poem, and in which Lord Byron endeavoured, as much as possible, to envenom his ridicule, he sent to me, in

* I have here given the exact copy of the original manuscript which is before me.

the course of the printing, for insertion, as being necessary, according to him, to complete the poetical character of Lord Carlisle. Six lines upon the same subject, which he also sent me to be inserted, he afterwards consented to relinquish at my earnest entreaty, which, however, was unavailing to procure the sacrifice of any other lines relating to this point. Under present circumstances they are become curious, and there can hardly be any objection to my inserting them here. They were intended to follow the first four lines upon the subject, and the whole passage would have stood thus—

Lords too are bards, such things at times befall,
And 'tis some praise in peers to write at all ;
Yet did not taste or reason sway the times,
Ah, who would take their titles with their rhymes.
In these, our times, with daily wonders big,
A lettered peer is like a lettered pig ;
Both know their alphabet, but who, from thence,
Infers that peers or pigs have manly sense,

Still less that such should woo the graceful nine ;
Parnassus was not made for lords and swine.
Roscommon ! Sheffield, &c. &c.

Besides the alteration of the panegyrical couplet upon Lord Carlisle, he readily acquiesced in my suggestions of placing Crabbe amongst the genuine sons of Apollo, and sent me these lines :

There be who say, in these enlightened days,
That splendid lies are all the poet's praise,
That strained invention ever on the wing
Alone impels the modern bard to sing.
'Tis true that all who rhyme, nay all who write,
Shrink from the fatal word to genius—trite ;
Yet Truth sometimes will lend her noblest fires
And decorate the verse herself inspires:
This fact in Virtue's name let Crabbe attest,
Though Nature's sternest painter, yet the best.

As to the title of the Poem, Lord Byron agreed with me in rejecting his own, but also rejected that I had proposed, and substituted the one with which it was published, “ *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.* ”

Upon taking the Satire to my publishers, Messrs. Longman and Co., they declined publishing it in consequence of its asperity, a circumstance to which he afterwards adverted in very strong language, making it the only condition with which he accompanied his gift to me of the copyright of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, that it should not be published by that house. I then gave it to Mr. Cawthorn, who undertook the publication.

In reading Lord Byron's Satire, and in tracing the progress of the alterations which he made in it as it proceeded, it is impossible not to perceive that his feelings rather than his judgment guided his pen; and sometimes he seems indifferent whether it should convey praise or blame. The influence of his altered feelings towards his noble relation has been already shown ; and an instance likewise occurred where he, on the contrary, substituted approbation for cen-

sure, though not of so strong a nature as in the former case. Towards the end of the Poem, where he, inconsiderately enough, compares the poetical talent of the two Universities, in the first printed copy that he brought from Newstead the passage stood thus :

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,
Expert in science, more expert in puns ?
Shall these approach the Muse? ah, no ! she flies
And even spurns the great Seatonian prize :
Though printers condescend the press to soil,
With odes by Smythe, and epic songs by Hoyle.
Hoyle, whose learn'd page, if still upheld by whist,
Required no sacred theme to bid us list.—
Ye who in Granta's honours would surpass,
Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass ;
A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.
Yet hold—as when by Heaven's supreme behest,
If found, ten righteous had preserved the rest
In Sodom's fated town, for Granta's name
Let Hodgson's genius plead, and save her fame.
But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,
The partial muse delighted loves tolave ;

On her green banks a greener wreath is wove,
To crown the bards that haunt her classic grove,
Where Richards wakes a genuine poet's fires,
And modern Britons justly praise their sires.

Previously, however, to giving the copy to me, he had altered the fifth line with his pen, making the couplet to stand thus :

Though printers condescend the press to soil,
With rhyme by Hoare, and epic blank by Hoyle !

and then he had drawn his pen through the four lines, beginning]

Yet hold, as when by Heaven's supreme behest,
and had written the following in their place.

Oh dark asylum of a Vandal race !
At once the boast of learning and disgrace,
So sunk in dulness and so lost in shame,
That Smythe and Hodgson scarce redeem thy fame.

I confess I was surprised to find the name of Smythe uncoupled from its press-soiling companion, to be so suddenly ranked with

that of Hodgson in such high praise. When, however, the fifth edition, which was suppressed, was afterwards preparing for publication, he again altered the two last lines to—

So lost to Phœbus that not Hodgson's verse
Can make thee better, or poor Hewson's worse.

In another instance, his feeling towards me induced him carefully to cover over with a paper eight lines, in which he had severely satirized a gentleman with whom he knew that I was in habits of intimacy, and to erase a note which belonged to them.

It is not difficult to observe the working of Lord Byron's mind in another alteration which he made. In the part where he speaks of Bowles, he makes a reference to Pope's deformity of person. The passage was originally printed in the country, thus:—

Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man ! at least they'll sell;
 Or take the only path that open lies
 For modern worthies who would hope to rise :—
 Fix on some well-known name, and bit by bit,
 Pare off the merits of his worth and wit ;
 On each alike employ the critic's knife,
 And where a comment fails prefix a life ;
 Hint certain failings, faults before unknown,
 Revive forgotten lies, and add your own ;
 Let no disease, let no misfortune 'scape,
 And print, if luckily deformed, his shape.
 Thus shall the world, quite undeceived at last,
 Cleave to their present wits, and quit the past ;
 Bards once revered no more with favour view,
 But give these modern sonnetteers their due :
 Thus with the dead may living merit cope,
 Thus Bowles may triumph o'er the shade of Pope !

He afterwards altered the whole of this passage except the two first lines, and in its place appeared the following :—

Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man ! at least they sell.
 But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
 Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe ;
 If chance some bard, though once by dunces feared,
 Now prone in dust can only be revered ;

If Pope, whose fame and genius from the first
Have foiled the best of critics, needs the worst,
Do thou essay,—each fault, each failing scan ;
The first of poets was, alas ! but man.

Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,
Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curr ;
Let all the scandals of a former age
Perch on thy pen and flutter o'er thy page ;
Affect a candour which thou cans't not feel,
Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal,
Write as if St. John's soul could still inspire,
And do from hate, what Mallet did for hire.
Oh ! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme,
Thronged with the rest around his living head,
Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead,
A meet reward had crowned thy glorious gains,
And linked thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.

I have very little doubt that the alteration of the whole of this passage was occasioned by the reference to Pope's personal deformity which Lord Byron had made in it. It is well known that he himself had an evident defect in one of his legs, which was shorter than the other, and ended in a club foot. On this subject he generally

appeared very susceptible, and sometimes when he was first introduced to any one, he betrayed an uncomfortable consciousness of his defect by an uneasy change of position ; and yet at other times he seemed quite devoid of any feeling of the kind, and once I remember that, in conversation, he mentioned a similar lameness of another person of considerable talents, observing, that people born lame are generally clever. This temporary cessation of a very acute susceptibility, is a phenomenon of the human mind for which it is difficult to account ; unless perhaps it be that the thoughts are sometimes carried into a train, where, though they cross these tender cords, the mind is so occupied as not to leave room for the jealous feeling which they would otherwise excite. Thus, Lord Byron, in the ardour of composition, had not time to admit the ideas, which, in a less excited moment, would rapidly have risen in connexion with the

thought of Pope's deformity of person; and the greater vanity of talent superseded the lesser vanity of person, and produced the same effect of deadening his susceptibility in the conversation to which I allude.

In Lord Byron's original Satire, the first lines of his attack upon Jeffrey, were these—

Who has not heard in this enlightened age,
When all can criticise th' historic age;
Who has not heard in James's bigot reign,
Of Jefferies ! monarch of the scourge and chain ?

These he erased and began,

Health to immortal Jeffrey ! once, in name,
England could boast a judge almost the same !

With this exception, and an omission about Mr. Lambe towards the end, the whole passage was published as it was first composed; indeed, as this seems to have been the inspiring object of the Satire, so these lines were most fluently written, and re-

quired least correction afterwards. Respecting the propriety of the note which is placed at the end of this passage, I had much discussion with Lord Byron. I was anxious that it should not be inserted, and I find the reason of my anxiety stated in a letter written to him after our conversation on the subject.—I here insert the letter, dated February 6, 1809 :—

“ MY DEAR LORD,

“ I have received your lines*, which shall be inserted in the proper place. May I say that I *question* whether *own* and *disown* be an allowable rhyme ?

Translation's servile work at length disown,
And quit Achaia's muse to court your own.

You see I cannot let any thing pass ; but this only proves to you how much I feel interested.

* Those complimenting the translators of the Anthology.

I have inserted the note on the kilted goddess; still I would fain have it omitted. My first objection was, that it was a fiction in prose, too wide of fact, and not reconcileable with your own praises of Caledonian genius. Another objection now occurs to me, of no little importance. There seems at present a disposition in Scotland to withdraw support from the Edinburgh Reviewers: that disposition will favour the circulation of your Satire in the north: this note of yours will damp all ardour for it beyond the Tweed. You have yet time; tell me to suppress it when I next have the pleasure of seeing you, which will be when I receive the first proof. I did hope to be able to bring the proof this morning, but the printer could not prepare the paper, &c. for the press till to-day. I am promised one by the day after to-morrow.

I trust you will approve of what I have done with the bookseller. He is to be at

all the expense and risk, and to account for half the profits *, for which he is to have one edition of a thousand copies. It would not have answered to him to have printed only five hundred on these terms. I have also promised him that he shall have the publishing of future editions, if the author chooses to continue it ; but I told him that I could not dispose of the copyright.

I have no doubt of the Poem being read in every quarter of the United Kingdom, *provided, however,* you do not affront Caledonia."

Lord Byron, in accordance with this letter, sent me a choice of couplets to supersede the one to the rhyme of which I had objected,

Though sweet the sound, disdain a borrow'd tone,
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own;

* The whole of the profits were left to the publisher without purchase.

or,

Though soft the echo, scorn a borrow'd tone,
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own.

But he protested against giving up his note of notes, as he called it, his solitary pun. I answered him as follows, in a letter dated February 7, 1809 :—

“ On another perusal of the objectionable note, I find that the omission of two lines only would render it inoffensive—but, as you please.

I observed to you that in the opening of the Poem there appears to be a sudden stop with Dryden. I still feel the gap there; and wish you would add a couple of lines for the purpose of connecting the sense, saying that Otway and Congreve had wove mimic scenes, and Waller tuned his lyre to love. If you do, “ But why these names, &c.” would follow well—and it

is perhaps the more requisite as you lash our present Dramatists*.

Half Tweed combin'd his waves to form a tear, will perhaps strike you, on reconsidering the line, to want alteration. You may make the river-god act without cutting him in two: you may make him ruffle half his stream to yield a tear†.

‘Hoyle, whose learned page, &c.’ The pronoun is an identification of the antecedent *Hoyle*, which is not your meaning—say, *Not he whose learned page, &c.*

Earth’s chief dictatress, Ocean’s lonely queen”—

The primary and obvious sense of *lonely* is solitary, which does not preclude the idea

* He inserted the following couplet—

Then Congreve’s scenes could cheer, or Otway’s melt,
For nature then an English audience felt.

† The line was printed thus—

Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear,

of the ocean having other queens. You may have some authority for the use of the word in the acceptation you here give it, but, like the custom in Denmark, I should think it more honoured in the breach than the observance. *Only* offers its service; or why not change the epithet altogether*?

I mention these little points to you now, because there is time to do as you please. I hope to call on you to-morrow; if I do not, it will be because I am disappointed of the proof."

During the printing of the Satire, my intercourse with Lord Byron was not only carried on personally, but also by constant notes which he sent me, as different subjects arose in his mind, or different suggestions occurred. It was interesting to see how much his thoughts were bent upon his

* He changed it to "mighty."

Poem, and how that one object gave a colour to all others that passed before him at the time, from which in turn he drew forth subjects for his Satire. After having been at the Opera one night, he wrote those couplets, beginning,

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art,
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart, &c.

and he sent them to me early on the following morning, with a request to have them inserted after the lines concerning Naldi and Catalani: so also other parts of the Satire arose out of other circumstances as they passed, and were written upon the spur of the moment.

To the Poem, as I originally received it, he added a hundred and ten lines, including those to Mr. Gifford, on the Opera, Kirke White, Crabbe, the Translators of the Anthology, and Lord Carlisle; and most of the address to Mr. Scott towards the con-

clusion. He once intended to prefix an Argument to the Satire, and wrote one. I have it, among many other manuscripts of his; and, as it becomes a curiosity, I insert it.

ARGUMENT INTENDED FOR THE SATIRE.

The poet considereth times past and their poesy—maketh a sudden transition to times present—is incensed against book-makers—revileth W. Scott for cupidity and ballad-mongering, with notable remarks on Master Southey—complaineth that Master Southey hath inflicted three poems, epic and otherwise, on the public—inveigheth against Wm. Wordsworth, but laudeth Mr. Coleridge and his elegy on a young ass—is disposed to vituperate Mr. Lewis—and greatly rebuketh Thomas Little (the late) and the Lord Strangford—recommendeth Mr. Hayley to turn his attention to prose—and exhorteth the Moravians to glorify Mr. Grahame—sympathizeth with the Rev. —— Bowles—and deploreth the melancholy fate of Montgomery—breaketh out into invective against the Edinburgh Reviewers—calleth them hard names, harpies, and the like—apostrophiseth Jeffrey and prophesieth—Episode of Jeffrey and Moore, their jeopardy and deliverance; portents on the morn of the combat; the Tweed, Tolbooth, Frith of Forth severally shocked; descent of a goddess to save Jeffrey; incorporation of the bullets

with his sinciput and occiput—Edinburgh Reviews *en masse*—Lord Aberdeen, Herbert, Scott, Hallam, Pillans, Lambe, Sydney Smith, Brougham, &c.—The Lord Holland applauded for dinners and translations—The Drama; Skeffington, Hook, Reynolds, Kenney, Cherry, &c.—Sheridan, Colman, and Cumberland called upon to write—Return to poesy—scribblers of all sorts—Lords sometimes rhyme; much better not—Hafiz, Rosa Matilda, and X. Y. Z.—Rogers, Campbell, Gifford, &c., true poets—Translators of the Greek Anthology—Crabbe—Darwin's style—Cambridge—Seatonian Prize—Smythe—Hodgson—Oxford—Richards—Poeta loquitur—Conclusion.

CHAPTER III.

TAKING HIS SEAT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS—
SECOND EDITION OF THE SATIRE—DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND.

I now saw Lord Byron daily. It was about this time that Lord Falkland was killed in a duel, which suggested some lines as the Satire was going through the press. Nature had endowed Lord Byron with very benevolent feelings, which I have had opportunities of discerning, and I have seen them at times render his fine countenance most beautiful. His features seemed formed in a peculiar manner for emanating the high conceptions of genius, and the workings of the passions. I have often, and with no little admiration, witnessed these

effects. I have seen them in the glow of poetical inspiration, and under the influence of strong emotion; on the one hand amounting to virulence, and on the other replete with all the expression and grace of the mild and amiable affections. When under the influence of resentment and anger, it was painful to observe the powerful sway of those passions over his features: when he was impressed with kindness, which was the natural state of his heart, it was a high treat to contemplate his countenance. I saw him the morning after Lord Falkland's death. He had just come from seeing the lifeless body of the man with whom he had a very short time before spent a social day; he now and then said, as if it were to himself, but aloud, "Poor Falkland!" He looked more than he spoke—"But his wife, it is she who is to be pitied." I saw his mind teeming with benevolent intentions—and they were not abortive. If ever an

action was pure, that which he then meditated was so; and the spirit that conceived, the man that performed it, was at that time making his way through briars and brambles to that clear but narrow path which leads to heaven. Those, who have taken pains to guide him from it, must answer for it!

The remembrance of the impression produced on Lord Byron by Lord Falkland's death, at the period I am retracing, has excited this slight, but sincere and just, effusion; and I am sensible that the indulgence of it needs no apology.

The Satire was published about the middle of March, previous to which he took his seat in the House of Lords, on the 13th of the same month. On that day, passing down St. James's-street, but with no intention of calling, I saw his chariot at his door, and went in. His countenance, paler than usual, showed that his mind was agi-

tated, and that he was thinking of the nobleman to whom he had once looked for a hand and countenance in his introduction to the House. He said to me—"I am glad you happened to come in; I am going to take my seat, perhaps you will go with me." I expressed my readiness to attend him; while, at the same time, I concealed the shock I felt on thinking that this young man, who, by birth, fortune, and talent, stood high in life, should have lived so unconnected and neglected by persons of his own rank, that there was not a single member of the senate to which he belonged, to whom he could or would apply to introduce him in a manner becoming his birth. I saw that he felt the situation, and I fully partook his indignation. If the neglect he had met with be imputed to an untoward or vicious disposition, a character which he gave himself, and which I understood was also given to him by others, it is

natural to ask, how he came by that disposition, for he got it not from Nature ? Had he not been left early to himself, or rather to dangerous guides and companions, would he have contracted that disposition ? Or even, had nature been cross, might it not have been rectified ? During his long minority, ought not his heart and his intellect to have been trained to the situation he was to fill ? Ought he not to have been saved from money-lenders, and men of business ? And ought not a shield to have been placed over a mind so open to impressions, to protect it from self-sufficient free-thinkers, and witty sophs ? The wonder is, not that he should have erred, but that he should have broken through the cloud that enveloped him, which was dispersed solely by the rays of his own genius.

After some talk about the Satire, the last sheets of which were in the press, I accompanied Lord Byron to the House. He

was received in one of the antechambers by some of the officers in attendance, with whom he settled respecting the fees he had to pay. One of them went to apprise the Lord Chancellor of his being there, and soon returned for him. There were very few persons in the House. Lord Eldon was going through some ordinary business. When Lord Byron entered, I thought he looked still paler than before; and he certainly wore a countenance in which mortification was mingled with, but subdued by, indignation. He passed the woolsack without looking round, and advanced to the table where the proper officer was attending to administer the oaths. When he had gone through them, the Chancellor quitted his seat, and went towards him with a smile, putting out his hand warmly to welcome him; and, though I did not catch his words, I saw that he paid him some compliment. This was all thrown away upon

Lord Byron, who made a stiff bow, and put the tips of his fingers into a hand, the amiable offer of which demanded the whole of his. I was sorry to see this, for Lord Eldon's character is great for virtue, as well as talent; and, even in a political point of view, it would have given me inexpressible pleasure to have seen him uniting heartily with him. The Chancellor did not press a welcome so received, but resumed his seat; while Lord Byron carelessly seated himself for a few minutes on one of the empty benches to the left of the throne, usually occupied by the Lords in opposition. When, on his joining me, I expressed what I had felt, he said: "If I had shaken hands heartily, he would have set me down for one of his party—but I will have nothing to do with any of them, on either side; I have taken my seat, and now I will go abroad." We returned to St. James's-street, but he did not recover his spirits.

The going abroad was a plan on which his thoughts had turned for some time ; I did not, however, consider it as determined, or so near at hand as it proved. In a few days he left town for Newstead Abbey, after seeing the last proof of the Satire, and writing a short preface to the Poem. In a few weeks I had the pleasure of sending him an account of its success, in the following letter, dated April 17, 1809 :

" The essence of what I have to say was comprised in the few lines I wrote to you in the cover of my letter to Mr. H**. Your Satire has had a rapid sale, and the publisher thinks the edition will soon be out. However, what I have to repeat to you is a legitimate source of pleasure, and I request you will receive it as the tribute of genuine praise.

In the first place, notwithstanding our precautions, you are already pretty generally

known to be the author. So Cawthorn tells me; and a proof occurred to myself at Hatchard's, the Queen's Bookseller. On inquiring for the Satire, he told me that he had sold a great many, and had none left, and was going to send for more, which I afterwards found he did. I asked who was the author? He said it was believed to be Lord Byron's. Did *he* believe it? Yes, he did. On asking the ground of his belief, he told me that a lady of distinction had, without hesitation, asked for it as Lord Byron's Satire. He likewise informed me that he had inquired of Mr. Gifford, who frequents his shop, whether it was yours. Mr. Gifford denied any knowledge of the author, but spoke very highly of it, and said a copy had been sent to him. Hatchard assured me that all who came to his reading-room admired it. Cawthorn tells me it is universally well-spoken of, not only among his own customers, but generally at

all the booksellers'. I heard it highly praised at my own publishers', where I have lately called several times. At Phillips's it was read aloud by Pratt to a circle of literary guests, who were unanimous in their applause:—The *Antijacobin*, as well as the *Gentleman's Magazine*, has already blown the trump of fame for you. We shall see it in the other Reviews next month, and probably in some severely handled, according to the connexions of the proprietors and editors with those whom it lashes. I shall not repeat my own opinion to you; but I will repeat the request I once made to you, *never to consider me as a flatterer*. Were you a monarch, and had conferred on me the most munificent favours, such an opinion of me would be a signal of retreat, if not of ingratitude: but if you think me sincere, and like me to be candid, I shall delight in your fame, and be happy in your friendship."

The success of the Satire brought him quickly to town. He found the edition almost exhausted, and began the preparations for another, to which he determined to prefix his name. I saw him constantly ; and in about a fortnight found the Poem completely metamorphosed, and augmented nearly four hundred lines, but retaining the whole of the first impression. He happily seized on some of the vices which at that juncture obtruded themselves on the public notice, and added some new characters to the list of authors with censure or applause. Among those who received the meed of praise, it gave me great pleasure to find my excellent friend Waller Rodwell Wright, whose poem “ *Horæ Ionicæ*,” was just published *. He allowed me to take home with me his manuscripts as he wrote them ;

* Mr. Wright was, at that time, Recorder of Bury St. Edmunds; and is now in a high judicial situation at Malta.

and so soon as the 10th of May I had a note from him, urging that they should to be sent to the press. He was desirous of hastening the new edition in order that he might see the last proofs before he left England; for, during his stay at Newstead Abbey, he had arranged with Mr. Hobhouse his plan of going abroad early in June, but whether, I believe, was not exactly settled; for he sometimes talked to me of crossing the line, sometimes of Persia and India. As I perceived the new edition not only concluded in a most bitter strain, and contained besides a prose postscript in which I thought he allowed his feelings to carry him to an excess of abuse and defiance that looked more like the vaunting ebullition of

“Some fiery youth of new commission vain
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man,”

than the dignified revenge of genius, I en-

deavoured to prevail upon him to suppress or alter it, as the proofs which I corrected passed my hands, but was only able to obtain some modification of his expressions. The following letter, which was the last that I wrote to him respecting the Satire before he left England, will show how strenuous I was on this point, and also the liberty which he allowed me to take:

“ Not being certain that I shall see you to-day, I write to tell you that I am angry with myself on finding that I have more deference for form, than friendship for the author of ‘ English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.’ The latter prompted me to tear the concluding pages, left at Cawthorn’s; the former withheld me, and I was weak enough to leave the lines to go to the printer. You have been so kind as to sacrifice some lines to me before. I be-

seech you to sacrifice these, for in every respect they injure the Poem, they injure you, and are pregnant with what you do not mean. I WILL NOT LET YOU print them. I am going to dine in St. James's-place to-day at five o'clock, and in the hope of having a battle with you, I will be in St. James's-street about four."

Very soon after this the Satire appeared in its new form, but too late for its author to enjoy his additional laurels before he left England. I was with him almost every day while he remained in London. Misanthropy, disgust of life leading to scepticism and impiety, prevailed in his heart and embittered his existence. He had for some time past been grossly attacked in several low publications, which he bore however with more temper than he did the blind headlong assault on his genius by the Edinburgh Review. Unaccustomed to fe-

male society, he at once dreaded and abhorred it; and spoke of women, such I mean as he neither dreaded nor abhorred, more as playthings than companions. As for domestic happiness he had no idea of it. "A large family," he said, "appeared like opposite ingredients mixed perforce in the same salad, and he never relished the composition." Unfortunately, having never mingled in family circles, he knew nothing of them; and, from being at first left out of them by his relations, he was so completely disgusted that he avoided them, especially the female part. "I consider," said he, "collateral ties as the work of prejudice, and not the bond of the heart, which must choose for itself unshackled." It was in vain for me to argue that the nursery, and a similarity of pursuits and enjoyments in early life, are the best foundations of friendship and of love; and that to choose freely, the knowledge of home was as requisite as

that of wider circles. In those wider circles he had found no friend, and but few companions, whom he used to receive with an assumed gaiety, but real indifference at his heart, and spoke of with little regard, sometimes with sarcasm. He used to talk of one young man, who had been his school-fellow, with an affection which he flattered himself was returned. I occasionally met this friend at his apartments, before his last excursion to Newstead. Their portraits, by capital painters, were elegantly framed, and surmounted with their respective coronets, to be exchanged. However, whether taught by ladies in revenge to neglect Lord Byron, or actuated by a frivolous inconstancy, he gradually lessened the number of his calls and their duration. Of this, however, Lord Byron made no complaint, till the very day I went to take my leave of him, which was the one previous to his departure. I found him bursting

with indignation. "Will you believe it," said he, "I have just met * * *, and asked him to come and sit an hour with me; he excused himself; and what do you think was his excuse? He was engaged with his mother and some ladies to go shopping! And he knows I set out to-morrow, to be absent for years, perhaps never to return! Friendship!—I do not believe I shall leave behind me, yourself and family excepted, and perhaps my mother, a single being who will care what becomes of me."

At this period of his life his mind was full of bitter discontent. Already satiated with pleasure, and disgusted with those companions who have no other resource, he had resolved on mastering his appetites; he broke up his harems; and he reduced his palate to a diet the most simple and abstemious; but the passions of the heart were too mighty, nor did it ever enter his mind to

overcome *them*: resentment, anger, and hatred held full sway over him, and his greatest gratification at that time was in overcharging his pen with gall, which flowed in every direction against individuals, his country, the world, the universe, creation, and the Creator. He might have become, he ought to have been, a different creature; and he but too well accounts for the unfortunate bias of his disposition in the following lines:—

E'en I—least thinking of a thoughtless throng,
Just skill'd to know the right and choose the wrong,
Freed at that age when Reason's shield is lost,
To fight my course through Passion's countless host;
Whom every path of Pleasure's flowery way
Has lured in turn, and all have led astray.

I took leave of him on the 10th of June, 1809, and he left London the next morning: his objects were still unsettled; but he wished to hear from me particularly on the subject of the Satire, and promised to inform

me how to direct to him when he could so with certainty ;—it was, however, long before I heard from him. After some time I wrote to him ; directing, at a chance, to Malta, informing him of the success of his Poem.

Leaving England with a soured mind, disclaiming all attachments, and even belief in the existence of friendship, it will be no wonder if it shall be found that Lord Byron, during the period of his absence, kept up little correspondence with any persons in England. A letter, dated at Constantinople, is the only one I received from him, till he was approaching the shores of England in the Volage frigate. To his mother he wrote by every opportunity. Upon her death, which happened very soon after his arrival, and before he saw her, I was conversing with him about Newstead, and expressing my hope that he would never be persuaded to part with it ; he assured me

he would not, and promised to give me a letter which he had written to his mother to that effect, as a pledge that he never would. His letters to her being at Newstead, it was some time before he performed his promise ; but in doing it he made me a present of all his letters to her on his leaving England and during his absence ; saying, as he put them into my hands, “ Some day or other they will be curiosities.” They are written in an easy style, and if they do not contain all that is to be expected from a traveller, what they do contain of that nature is pleasant ; and they strongly mark the character of the writer.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD BYRON'S TRAVELS IN 1809, 1810, AND 1811.

THE Letters which Lord Byron had thus given to me were twenty in number. They consisted of two short ones written from Newstead, at the end of 1808; one written from London, in March, 1809; fifteen written during his travels from Falmouth, Gibraltar, Malta, Previsa, Smyrna, Constantinople, Athens, and Patras, in 1810 and 1811; one written on board the Volage frigate, on his approach to England when returning; and a short note from London, to announce his intention of going down to Newstead.

These letters were the only ones Lord

Byron wrote during his travels, with the single exception of letters of business to his agent. Letter-writing was a matter of irksome duty to him, but one which he felt himself bound to perform to his mother. The letters are sometimes long and full of detail, and sometimes short, and mere intimations of his good health and progress, according as the humour of the moment overcame or not his habitual reluctance to the task. I cannot but lament that any circumstances should deprive the British public of such lively and faithful delineations of the mind and character of Lord Byron as are to be found in these letters. They do not, it is true, contain the information which is usually expected from a talented traveller through an interesting country; but they do contain the index and guide which enables the reader to travel into that more interesting region—the mind and heart of such a man as Lord

Byron; and though it might be desirable that he should have given a fuller description of his travels, it is highly satisfactory that he should unconsciously have left the means of penetrating into the natural character of so singular a being.

Lord Byron's letters to his mother are more likely to furnish these means than any thing else that he has left us; because they contain the only natural expression of his feelings, freely poured forth in the very circumstances that excited them, with no view at the time to obtain or keep up a particular character, and therefore with no restraint upon his own character. This was never afterwards the case.

From the moment that the publication of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* placed him, as it were, by the wand of an enchanter, upon an elevated pedestal in the Temple of Fame, he could not write any thing even in familiar correspondence, which was not

in some degree influenced by the idea of supporting a character; especially as, after the death of his mother, he had no correspondent to whom he made it a duty, at certain intervals, to communicate his thoughts.

It is, therefore, in the natural turn of thought, not shewn forth by any expression of decided opinions, but rather permitted to be seen in the light touches and unpremeditated indications of feeling, with which these letters abound, that the original character of Lord Byron is more surely to be traced. I say his *original* character, because so great an alteration took place at least in the degree, if not in the nature of it, after the publication of his first great poem, that the traits which might give us an insight into his mind at the one period, will scarcely afford us ground to form any judgment of it at the other. I deeply regret that being prevented from making any thing like quo-

tations from these letters, it is impossible for me to convey in any adequate degree the spirit of the character which they display.

At Newstead, just before his coming of age, he planned his future travels; and his original intention included a much larger portion of the world than that which he afterwards visited. He first thought of Persia, to which idea indeed he for a long time adhered. He afterwards meant to sail for India; and had so far contemplated this project as to write for information from the Arabic Professor at Cambridge, and to ask his mother to inquire of a friend who had lived in India, what things would be necessary for his voyage. He formed his plan of travelling upon very different grounds from those which he afterwards advanced. All men should travel at one time or another, he thought, and he had then no connexions to prevent him; when he returned he might

enter into political life, for which travelling would not incapacitate him, and he wished to judge of men by experience. He had been compared by some one to Rousseau, but he disclaimed any desire to resemble so illustrious a lunatic; though he wished to live as much by himself and in his own way as possible.

While at Newstead at this time, and in contemplation of his intended departure, he made a will which he meant to have formally executed as soon as he came of age. In it he made a proper provision for his mother, bequeathing her the manor of Newstead *for her life*. How different a will from that which, with so different a mind and heart, he really executed seven years afterwards !

A short time after this a proposal was made to him by his man of business to sell Newstead Abbey, which made his mother uneasy upon the subject. To set her mind

at ease he declared, in the strongest terms, that his own fate and Newstead were inseparable; stating, at the same time, the fittest and noblest reasons why he should never part with Newstead, and affirming that the finest fortune in the country should not purchase it from him. The letter in which he had written his sentiments on this subject, was that which he gave to me to keep as a pledge that he never would dispose of Newstead. Nor was it, indeed, until he had abandoned himself to the evil influence which afterwards beset him, that he forgot his solemn promise to his mother, and the pledge of honour which he voluntarily put into my hands, and then bartered the last vestige of the inheritance of his family.

He left London in June, 1809; and his acute sensibility being deeply wounded at his relation's conduct when taking his seat in the House of Lords, and by the disappointment he had experienced on parting

with the friend whom he had believed to be so affectionately attached to him, he talked of a regretless departure from the shores of England, and said he had no wish to revisit any thing in it, except his mother and Newstead Abbey. The state of his affairs annoyed him also much. He had consented to the sale of his estate in Lancashire, and if it did not produce what he expected, or what would be sufficient for his emergencies, he thought of entering into some foreign service ; the Austrian, the Russian, or even the Turkish, if he liked their manners. Amongst his suite was a German servant, who had been already in Persia with Mr. Wilbraham, and a lad whom he took with him, because he thought him, like himself, a friendless creature ; and to the few regrets that he had felt on leaving his native country, his heart made him add that of parting with an old servant, whose age prevented his master from hoping to see him again.

The objects that he met with in his journey as far as Gibraltar, seemed to have occupied his mind, to the exclusion of his gloomy and misanthropic thoughts; for the letter which he wrote to his mother from thence contains no indication of them, but, on the contrary, much playful description of the scenes through which he had passed. The beautiful Stanzas, from the 16th to the .30th of the first Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, are the exact echoes of the thoughts which occurred to his mind at the time, as he went over the spot described. In going into the library of the convent of Mafra the monks conversed with him in Latin, and asked him whether the *English* had *any books* in their country. From Mafra he went to Seville, and was not a little surprised at the excellence of the horses and roads in Spain, by which he was enabled to travel nearly four hundred miles in four days, without fatigue or annoyance.

At Seville Lord Byron lodged in the house of two unmarried ladies, one of whom, however, was going to be married soon ; and though he remained there only three days she did not scruple to pay him the most particular attentions, which, as they were women of character, and mixing in society, rather astonished him. His Sevillean hostess embraced him at parting with great tenderness, cutting off a lock of his hair and presenting him with a very long one of her own, which he forwarded to his mother in his next letter. With this specimen of Spanish female manners, he proceeded to Cadiz, where various incidents occurred to him calculated to confirm the opinion he had formed at Seville of the Andalusian belles, and which made him leave Cadiz with regret, and determine to return to it.

Lord Byron kept no journal ; while his companion, Mr. Hobhouse, was occupied

without ceasing in making notes. His aversion to letter-writing also occasions great chasms in the only account that can be obtained of his movements from himself. He wrote, however, to his mother from Malta, merely to announce his safety; and forwarded the letter by Mrs. Spencer Smith, whose eccentric character and extraordinary situation very much attracted his attention. He did not write again until November, 1809, from Previsa.

Upon arriving at Yanina, Lord Byron found that Ali Pacha was with his troops in Illyricum besieging Ibrahim Pacha in Berat; but the Vizier, having heard that an English nobleman was in his country, had given orders at Yanina to supply him with every kind of accommodation free of all expense. Thus he was not allowed to pay for any thing whatever, and was forced to content himself with making presents to the slaves. From Yanina he went to Te-

paleen, a journey of nine days, owing to the autumnal torrents which retarded his progress. The scene which struck him upon entering Tepaleen, at the time of the sun's setting, recalled to his mind the description of Branksome Castle, in Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The different objects which presented themselves to his view when arriving at the Pacha's palace,—the Albanians in their superb costume—the Tartars and the Turks with their separate peculiarities of dress—the row of two hundred horses, ready caparisoned, waiting in a large open gallery—the couriers which the stirring interest of the neighbouring siege made to pass in and out constantly—the military music—the boys repeating the hour from the Minaret of the Mosque,—are all faithfully and exactly described as he saw them, in the 55th and following stanzas, to the 60th of the second Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

He was lodged in the palace, and the next day introduced to Ali Pacha.—Ali said, that the English minister had told him that Lord Byron's family was a great one; and he desired him to give his respects to his mother, which his Lordship faithfully delivered immediately. The Pacha declared that he knew him to be a man of rank from the smallness of his ears, his curling hair, and his little white hands; and told him to consider himself under his protection as that of a father while he remained in Turkey, as he looked on him as his son; and, indeed, he showed how much he considered him as a child, by sending him sweetmeats, and fruit, and nice things repeatedly during the day.

In going in a Turkish ship of war, provided for him by Ali Pacha, from Previsa, intending to sail for Patras, Lord Byron was very nearly lost in but a moderate gale of wind, from the ignorance of the Turkish

officers and sailors—the wind, however, abated, and they were driven on the coast of Suli. The confusion appears to have been very great on board the galliot, and somewhat added to by the distress of Lord Byron's valet, Fletcher, whose natural alarms upon this, and other occasions; and his untravelled requirements of English comforts, such as tea, &c., not a little amused his master, and were frequently the subject of good-humoured jokes with him. An instance of disinterested hospitality, in the chief of a Suliote village, occurred to Lord Byron in consequence of his disasters in the Turkish galliot. The honest Albanian, after assisting him in the distress in which he found himself, supplying his wants, and lodging him and his suite, consisting of Fletcher, a Greek, two Athenians, a Greek priest, and his companion, Mr. Hobhouse, refused to receive any remuneration; and only asked him for a written acknow-

ledgment that he had been well-treated. When Lord Byron pressed him to take money, he said, "I wish you to love me, not to pay me."

At Yanina, on his return, he was introduced to Hussian Bey and Mahmout Pacha, two young grandchildren of Ali Pacha, very unlike lads, having painted faces, large black eyes, and regular features. They were nevertheless very pretty, and already instructed in all the court ceremonies. Mahmout, the younger, and he were friends without understanding each other, like a great many other people, though for a different reason.

Lord Byron wrote several times to his mother from Smyrna, from whence he went in the Salsette frigate to Constantinople. It was while this frigate was lying at anchor in the Dardanelles, that he swam from Sestos to Abydos,—an exploit which he seemed to have remembered ever after

with very great pleasure, repeating it and referring to it in no less than five of his letters to his mother, and in the only two letters he wrote to me while he was away.

It was not until after Lord Byron arrived at Constantinople that he decided not to go on to Persia, but to pass the following summer in the Morea. At Constantinople, Mr. Hobhouse left him to return to England, and by him he wrote to me and to his mother. He meant also to have sent back his man, Fletcher, with Mr. Hobhouse; as, however good a servant in England, he found him an incumbrance in his progress. Lord Byron had now tasted the delights of travelling; he had seen much, both of country and of mankind; he had neither been disappointed nor disgusted with what he had met with; and though he had passed many a fatiguing, he had never spent a tedious hour. This led him to

fear that these feelings might excite in him a gipsy-like wandering disposition, which would make him uncomfortable at home, knowing such to be frequently the case with men in the habit of travelling. He had mixed with persons in all stations in life had lived amongst the most splendid, and sojourned with the poorest, and found the people harmless and hospitable. He had passed some time with the principal Greeks in the Morea and Livadia, and he classed them as inferior to the Turks, but superior to the Spaniards, whom he placed before the Portuguese. At Constantinople, his judgment of Lady Mary Wortley was, that she had not overstepped the truth near so much as would have been done by any other woman under similar circumstances; but he differed from her when she said “St. Paul’s would cut a strange figure by St. Sophia’s.” He felt the great interest which St. Sophia’s possesses from various

considerations, but he thought it by no means equal to some of the Mosques, and not to be written on the same leaf with St. Paul's. According to his idea, the Cathedral at Seville was superior to both, or to any religious edifice he knew. He was enchanted with the magnificence of the walls of the city, and the beauty of the Turkish burying grounds ; and he looked with enthusiasm at the prospect on each side from the Seven Towers, to the end of the Golden Horn.

When Lord Byron had lost his companion at Constantinople, he felt great satisfaction at being once more alone ; for his nature led him to solitude, and his disposition towards it encreased daily. There were many men there and in the Morea who wished to join him ; one to go to Asia, another to Egypt. But he preferred going alone over his old track, and to look upon his old objects, the seas and the

mountains, the only acquaintances that improved upon him. He was a good deal annoyed at this juncture by the persevering silence of *his man of business*, from whom he had never once heard since his departure from England, in spite of the critical situation of his affairs; and yet, it is remarkable with how much patience he bore with circumstances, which certainly were calculated to excite the anger of one of less irritable disposition than his own.

Whether it were owing to his having been left alone to his own reflections, or whether it be merely attributable to the uneven fluctuations of an unsettled mind, it appears that Lord Byron's thoughts at this time had some tendency towards a recovery from the morbid state of moral apathy which upon some important points he had evinced. He felt the advantage of looking at mankind in the original, and not in the picture—of reading them-

selves, instead of the account of them in books; he saw the disadvantageous results of remaining at home with the narrow prejudices of an islander, and wished that the youth of our country were forced by law to visit our allied neighbours. He had conversed with French, Italians, Germans, Danes, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, &c. &c., and without losing sight of his own nation, could form an estimate of the countries and manners of others; but, at the same time, he felt *gratified* when he found that England was *superior* in any thing. This shows the latent spark of patriotism in his heart.

He wished when he returned to England to lead a quiet and retired life; in thinking of which, his mind involuntarily acknowledged that God knew, but arranged the best for us all. This acknowledgment seemed to call forth the remembrance of his acquired infidelity; and, for the sake of

consistency, he qualified it by giving it as the general belief, and he had nothing to oppose to such a doctrine, as upon the whole he could not complain of his own lot. He was *convinced* that mankind did more harm to themselves than Satan could do to them. These are singular assertions for Lord Byron, and shew that, at that time at least, his mind was in a state which might have admitted of a different result than that which unhappily followed.

I have already said, that Lord Byron took no notes of his travels, and he did not intend to publish any thing concerning them; but it is curious that, while he was in Greece, he made a determination that he would publish no more on any subject—he would appear no more as an author—he was quite satisfied, if by his Satire he had shown to the critics and the world that he was something above what they supposed him to be, nor would he hazard the

reputation that work might have procured him by publishing again. He had, indeed, other things by him, as the event proved ; but he resolved, that if they were worth giving to the public, it should be posthumously, that the remembrance of him might be continued when he could no longer remember.

Previous to his return to England, the proposal to sell Newstead was renewed. His mother again showed her feeling upon the subject. His own feelings and determinations were unchanged. If it was necessary that money should be procured by the sale of land, he was willing to part with Rochdale. He sent Fletcher to England with papers to that effect. He, besides, had no reliance on the funds ; but the main point of his objection to the proposal was, that the only thing that bound him to England was Newstead—if by any extraordinary event he should be induced to part

with it, he was resolved to pass his life abroad. The expenses of living in the East, with all the advantages of climate and abundance of luxury, were trifling in comparison with what was necessary for competence in England. He was resolved that Newstead should not be sold: he had fixed upon the alternative—if Newstead remained with him, he would come back—if not, he never would.

Lord Byron returned to England in the Volage frigate, on the 2d July, 1811, after having been absent two years exactly to a day. He experienced very similar feelings of indifference in approaching its shores, to those with which he had left them. His health had not suffered, though it had been interrupted by two sharp fevers; he had, however, put himself entirely upon a vegetable diet, never taking either fish or flesh, and drinking no wine.

CHAPTER V.

RETURN TO ENGLAND—HINTS FROM HORACE—
HIS OPINION OF CHILDE HAROLD'S
PILGRIMAGE.
—

EARLY in July, 1811, I received a letter from Lord Byron, written on board the Volage frigate, at sea, on the 28th of June, in which, after informing me of his approaching return, he shortly recapitulates the principal countries he has travelled through, and does not forget to mention his swimming from Sestos to Abydos. He expected little pleasure in coming home, though he brought a spirit still unbroken. He dreaded the trouble he should have to encounter in the arrangement of his affairs. His Satire was at that time in the fourth

edition; and at that period, being able to think and act more coolly, he affected to feel sorry that he had written it. This was, however, an immense sacrifice to a vague sense of propriety, as is clear from his having even then in his possession an imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry, ready for the press, which was nothing but a continuation of the Satire; and also from the subsequent preparation of a fifth edition of the very work which he professed to regret having written.

Lord Byron frequently exercised his wit upon the subject of a young man of the name of Blackett—so poor that he worked in a garret, as a shoemaker, and did not procure sufficient employment to make life tolerably comfortable; in spite of which he married, and had children. In his unoccupied hours he made verses as well as shoes. Some of these found their way into the hands of Mr. Pratt, himself a successful writer,

whose benevolence and enthusiasm always equalled, and sometimes outstripped, his judgment. He immediately saw latent genius in those essays of an uneducated man, sought him, became confirmed in the opinion he had formed, and, doubly excited by the miserable state in which he found him, resolved to do him all the service that his pen and influence could effect publicly and privately. He collected a volume of his writings sufficient to form the foundation of a subscription, which soon became so ample as to lower him from his attics. Pratt then persuaded Mr. Elliston, the actor, to be among his applauders and protectors. I remember hearing Mr. Elliston speak of a dramatic production of Blackett's with infinite ardour, and of the author as a wonderful genius. I do not, however, think that he ever produced the piece. Other patrons and patronesses appeared; and it is a curious incident that one of the latter,

then a perfect stranger to Lord Byron, should afterwards become his wife. That lady and her parents were very kind to Blackett ; invited him, as I was informed, to the country where their estates lie, and accommodated him with a cottage to reside in. The poor fellow's constitution, either originally weak, or undermined by the hardships of poverty, failed him at a very early period of life. After some stay at the cottage, he was advised to go and breathe the air of his native place, though situated more to the north. There, for a short time, he comforted his mother, and was comforted by her, and by the benevolent attentions of several kind physicians. Upon his death, Mr. Pratt collected all his additional compositions ; and, adopting the title which Mr. SOUTHEY had given to the works of KIRKE WHITE, published the whole of his writings together as “ The Remains of Joseph Blackett,” by which another con-

siderable collection was made, and formed into a fund for the support of Blackett's surviving daughter.

Genius, we well know, is not the exclusive inheritance of the affluent, but without a considerable degree of education it has not the means of displaying itself, especially in poetry, where the flowers of language are almost as essential as the visions of fancy. Rhetoric and grammar are not necessary in mechanics and mathematics, but they must be possessed by the Poet, whose title to genius may be overturned by the confusion of metaphors and the incongruities of tropes. I believe all the Poets of low origin partook, more or less, of the advantages of education. The last of these was Kirke White, whose learning and piety, however, I always thought far superior to his poetical nerve. Blackett was deficient in common learning. I had more pleasure in observing the improvement of his condi-

tion than in the perusal of his writings; though, in spite of the ridicule of Lord Byron, and my Ionian friend, as Lord Byron called Waller Wright, I saw, or was persuaded by Mr. Pratt's warmth to see, some sparkling of genius in the effusions of this young man. It was upon this that Lord Byron and a young friend of his were sometimes playful in conversation; and, in writing to me, "I see," says the latter, "that Blackett the Son of Crispin and Apollo is dead. Looking into Boswell's Life of Johnson the other day, I saw, 'We were talking about the famous Mr. Wordsworth, the poetical Shoemaker;'—Now, I never before heard that there had been a Mr. Wordsworth a Poet, a Shoemaker, or a famous man; and I dare say you have never heard of him. Thus it will be with Bloomfield and Blackett—their names two years after their death will be found neither on the rolls of Curriers' Hall nor of Par-

nassus. Who would think that any body would be such a blockhead as to sin against an express proverb, ‘ Ne sutor ultra crepidam !’

But spare him, ye Critics, his follies are past,
For the Cobler is come, as he ought, to his *last*.

Which two lines, with a scratch under *last*, to shew where the joke lies, I beg that you will prevail on Miss Milbank to have inserted on the tomb of her departed Blackett.” In my reply, I said, “ With respect to Blackett, whatever you may think of his presumption in attempting to ascend Parnassus, you cannot blame him for descending from a garret to a drawing-room; for changing starvation and misery for good food and flattering attention; an unwilling apothecary, for physicians rivalling one another in solicitude and disinterested attendance; which change, I can assure you, is nothing more than literal truth.” This produced the following rejoinder: “ You seem

to me to put Blackett's case quite in the right light:—to be sure any one would rise if he could, and any one has a right to make the effort; but then any one, on the other hand, has a right to keep the aspirant down, if he thinks the man's pretensions ill-founded. I do not laugh at Blackett, but at those who flattered him. He, poor fellow, was perfectly right, if he could find protectors, to gain them, either by verse-making or shoe-making. Indeed, he was right in trying the former, as by far the most easy and expeditious of the two. Were a regular bred author, a gentleman of education, to write like them, their verses would not be tolerated. But every one is in a stare of admiration that a cobler or a tinker should be able to rhyme at all. We gaze at them, not at their poetry, which is like the crabs found in the heart of a rock:

‘ The thing we know is neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil it got there?’

Some applaud the prodigy out of sheer bad taste ; they do not know that his nonsense is nonsense ; others out of pure humanity and goodness of heart. The first are such people as Pratt and Capel Lofft : the second, such critics as yourself, my dear Sir. But this is, as I said before, a piece of injustice to men of education, who may sweat, strain, and labour, and, when they have done their best, hear their own qualifications quoted against them :—The world says, ‘ Mr. —— ought to have known better—I wonder a man of his education should fail so wretchedly.’ You must not bring G * * against me, nor a much greater man, Burns, because the one was a cobler, and the other a ploughman : for, reading their verses, we never think of the poet ; no, we only are intent upon and admire the poetry, which would have delighted us had it been written by Dryden, or Gay, or any other great name. In the other case, we

ought to content ourselves with saying, ‘There goes a wonderful cobler.’ It is folly and falsehood to say, ‘Look at that poet, he was a cobler once.’ It is very true that he was a cobler once ; but it is not true that he is a poet now. Shall I tell you, however, to what the reputation of this sort of men is owing? Doubtless it is to the vanity of those who choose to set up for patrons, and who, because men of sense and character would scorn their protection, look out for little sparklings of talent in the depth and darkness of cellars and stalls, and having popped upon something to their mind, stamp it with their own seal of merit to pass current with the world. You know a man of true genius will not suffer himself to be patronized ; but a patron is the life and soul and existence of your surprising fellows. The only legitimate patron is the respectable bookseller, and he will not take a cobler’s verses, unless they are brought

to him by some Mæcenas who will promise to run all risks."

Upon receiving Lord Byron's letter from on-board the Volage, I wrote him the following :—

" I called this morning at Reddish's Hotel, with the hope of hearing something of you, since which your letter, written at sea, has been delivered to me. On Monday I trust I shall have the pleasure of welcoming you in person back to England. I hope you will find more pleasure in it than you seem to promise yourself. I pity you indeed for the bustle that awaits you in the arrangement of your affairs. I wish you would allow me to recommend to you a gentleman whom I have long known; a man of the strictest honour; a man of business; and one of the best

accountants in the kingdom. He would, I am confident, save you a world of trouble and a world of money. I know how much he has done for others, who, but for him, would have been destroyed by the harpies of extortion. I will tell you more of him when we meet, unless you should think I have already taken sufficient liberty, in which case I should only beg you to forget it for the sake of my intention. I rejoice to hear that you are prepared for the press. I hope to have you in *prose* as well as verse by and by. You will find your Satire not forgotten by the public: it is going fast through its fourth edition, and I cannot call that a *middling run*. Some letters have passed between Hobhouse and me. His account of my son was truly gratifying to me. He is a fortunate lad. I wish *you* had touched at Cadiz, in your way home. George Byron and he I find are in correspondence."

On the 15th of July I had the pleasure of shaking hands with him at Reddish's Hotel, in St. James's-street. I thought his looks belied the report he had given me of his bodily health, and his countenance did not betoken melancholy, or displeasure at his return. He was very animated in the account of his travels, but assured me he had never had the least idea of writing them. He said he believed satire to be his *forte*, and to that he had adhered, having written, during his stay at different places abroad, a paraphrase of *Horace's Art of Poetry*, which would be a good finish to English Bards and Scotch Reviewers; forgetting the regret which, in his last letter, he had expressed to me for having written it. He seemed to promise himself additional fame from it, and I undertook to superintend its publication, as I had done that of the Satire. I had chosen the hour ill for my visit, and we had hardly any time to con-

verse uninterrupted; he therefore engaged me to breakfast with him the next morning. In the mean time I looked over the Paraphrase, which I had taken home with me, and I must say I was grievously disappointed. Not that the verse was bad, or the images of the Roman poet badly adapted to the times; but a muse much inferior to his might have produced them in the smoky atmosphere of London, whereas he had been roaming under the cloudless skies of Greece, on sites where every step he took might have set such a fancy as his “in fine phrenzies rolling.” But the poem was his, and the affection he had acquired in my heart was undiminished.

The following lines are inserted as a fair specimen of it. It began thus:—

“ Who would not laugh, if LAWRENCE, hir’d to grace
His costly canvass with each flatter’d face,
Abus’d his art, till Nature with a blush
Saw Cits grow Centaurs underneath his brush ?

Or should some limner join, for show or sale,
A maid of honour to a mermaid's tail ;
Or low D*** (as once the world has seen)
Degrade God's creature's in his graphic spleen—
Not all that forced politeness which defends
Fools in their faults, could gag his grinning friends.
Believe me, MOSCHUS, like that picture seems
The book which, sillier than a sick man's dreams,
Displays a crowd of figures incomplete,
Poetic night-mares without head or feet.

Poets and painters, as all artists know,
May shoot a little with a lengthen'd bow ;
We claim this mutual mercy for our task,
And grant in turn the pardon which we ask ;
But make not monsters spring from gentle dams—
Birds breed not vipers, tigers nurse not lambs.

A laboured long exordium sometimes tends
(Like patriot speeches) but to paltry ends ;
And nonsense in a lofty note goes down,
As pertness passes with a legal gown :
Thus many a bard describes in pompous strain
The clear brook babbling through the goodly plain ;
The groves of Granta, and her Gothic halls,
King's Coll.—Cam's stream—stain'd windows, and old
walls ;

Or in advent'rous numbers neatly aims
To paint a rainbow, or—the river Thames*.

You sketch a tree, and so perhaps may shine ;
But daub a shipwreck like an alehouse sign :
Why place a VASE, which dwindling to a POT,
You glide down Grub-street, fasting and forgot ?
Laughed into Lethe by some quaint review,
Whose wit is never troublesome—till true.

In fine, to whatsoever you aspire,
Let it at least be simple and entire.
The greater portion of the rhyming tribe
(Give ear, my friend, for thou hast been a scribe)
Are led astray by some peculiar lure ;
I labour to be brief—become obscure :
One feeds while following elegance too fast ;
Another soars—inflated with bombast :
Too low a third crawls on—afraid to fly,
He spins his subject to satiety ;
Absurdly varying, he at last engraves
Fish in the woods, and boars beneath the waves !

Unless your care's exact, your judgment nice,
The flight from folly leads but into vice :
None are complete, all wanting in some part,
Like certain tailors, limited in art—

* “ Where pure description holds the place of sense.”—POPE.

For coat and waistcoat Slowshears is your man ;
But breeches claim another artisan *.—
Now this to me, I own, seems much the same
As Vulcan's feet to bear Apollo's frame ;
Or, with a fair complexion, to expose
Black eyes, black ringlets, and a bottle nose !

Dear authors ! suit your topics to your strength,
And ponder well your subject and its length ;
Nor lift your load until you're quite aware
What weight your shoulders will or will not bear :
But lucid Order and Wit's siren voice
Await the poet skilful in his choice ;
With native eloquence he soars along,
Grace in his thoughts and music in his song.—
Let judgment teach him wisely to combine
With future parts the now omitted line :
This shall the author choose, or that reject
Precise in style, and cautious to select.

Nor slight applause will candid pens afford
The dext'rous coiner of a *wanting* word.

* Mere common mortals were commonly content with one tailor and one bill; but the more finished gentlemen found it impossible to confide their lower garments to the makers of their body-clothes. I speak of the beginning of 1809; what reform may have since taken place I neither know nor desire to know.

Then fear not, if 'tis needful, to produce
Some term unknown, or obsolete in use :
As PITT * has furnished us a word or two,
Which Lexicographers declined to do ;
So you, indeed, with care (but be content
To take this license rarely) may invent.

New words find credit in these latter days,
Adroitly grafted on a Gallic phrase ;
What CHAUCER, SPENSER did, we scarce refuse
To DRYDEN's or to POPE's maturer muse.
If you can add a little, say, why not,
As well as WILLIAM Pitt, and WALTER SCOTT ?
Since they by force of rhyme and force of lungs,
Enriched our island's ill-united tongues ;
'Tis then—and shall be—lawful to present
Reforms in writing as in Parliament.

As forests shed their foliage by degrees,
So fade expressions, which in season please ;
And we and ours, alas, are due to fate,
And works and words but dwindle to a date.
Though as a monarch nods, and commerce calls,
Impetuous rivers stagnate in canals ;

* Mr. Pitt was liberal in his additions to our Parliamentary Tongue, as may be seen in many publications, particularly the Edinburgh Review.

Though swamps subdued, and marshes dried, sustain
The heavy ploughshare, and the yellow grain ;
And rising ports along the busy shore,
Protect the vessel from old Ocean's roar ;
All, all must perish—but, surviving last,
The love of letters half preserves the past :—
Thus future years dead volumes shall revive,
And those shall sink which now appear to thrive*,
As custom arbitrates, whose shifting sway
Our life and language must alike obey.

The immortal wars which Gods and angels wage,
Are they not shown in Milton's sacred page ?
His strain will teach what numbers best belong
To themes celestial told in Epic song.

The slow sad stanza will correctly paint
The lover's anguish, or the friend's complaint ;
But which deserves the laurel—rhyme—or blank ?
Which holds on Helicon the higher rank ?
Let squabbling critics by themselves dispute
This point, as puzzling as a chancery suit.

* Old ballads, old plays, and old women's stories, are at present in as much request as old wine or newspapers : in fact, this is the millennium of black-letter ; thanks to our WEBERS and SCOTTS !

Satiric rhyme first sprang from selfish spleen;
 You doubt—see DRYDEN, POPE, ST. PATRICK'S
 DEAN.*

Blank verse is now with one consent allied
 To tragedy, and rarely quits her side:
 Though mad Almanzor rhym'd in DRYDEN's days,
 No sing-song hero rants in modern plays;
 While modest comedy her verse foregoes,
 To jest and *pun*† in very middling prose:
 Not that our Bens or Beaumonts show the worse,
 Or lose one point because they wrote in verse:
 But so Thalia ventures to appear—
 Poor Virgin! damned some twenty times a-year.

* * * * *

'Tis hard to venture where our betters fail,
 Or lend fresh interest to a twice-told tale.
 And yet, perchance, 'tis wiser to prefer
 A hackneyed plot, than choose a new, and err.
 Yet copy not too closely, but record
 More justly thought for thought, than word for word.

* M'Flecknoe, much of the Dunciad, and all SWIFT's lampooning ballads.

† With all the vulgar applause and critical abhorrence of *puns*, they have Aristotle on their side, who permits them to orators, and gives them consequence by a grave disquisition.

Nor trace your prototype through narrow ways,
But only follow where he merits praise.
For you, young bard, whom luckless fate may lead
To tremble on the nod of all who read,
Ere your first score of *Cantos* time unrolls,
Beware—for God's sake don't begin like **BOWLES***!

* About two years ago, a young man, named **TOWNSEND**, was announced by **MR. CUMBERLAND** (in a Review since deceased) as being engaged in an epic poem, to be entitled “*Armageddon*.” The plan and specimen promise much; but I hope neither to offend **MR. T.** or his friends, by recommending to his attention the lines of Horace to which these rhymes allude. If **MR. T.** succeeds in his undertaking, as there is reason to hope, how much will the world be indebted to **MR. CUMBERLAND** for bringing him before the public. But till that eventful day arrives, it may be doubted whether the premature display of his plan (sublime as the ideas confessedly are) has not, by raising expectation too high, or diminishing curiosity by developing his argument, rather incurred the hazard of injuring **MR. T.**'s future prospects. **MR. Cumberland** (whose talents I shall not depreciate by the humble tribute of my praise) and **MR. T.** must not suppose me actuated by unworthy motives in this suggestion. I wish the author all the success he can wish himself, and shall be truly happy to see epic poetry weighed up from the bathos where it lies sunken with **Southey, Cottle, Cowley, (Mrs.**

“ Awake a louder and a loftier strain”—
And pray—what follows from his boiling brain?
He sinks to SOUTHEY’s level in a trice,
Whose Epic mountains never fail in mice.
Not so of yore awoke your mighty sire
The tempered warblings of his master lyre.
Soft as the gentler breathing of the lute,
“ Of man’s first disobedience and the fruit”
He speaks, but as his subject swells along,
Earth, heaven, and Hades echo with the song.

or Abraham) Ogilvie, Wilkie, Page, and all the “ dull of past and present days.” Even if he is not a *Milton*, he may be better than a *Blackmore*; if not a *Homer*, an *Antimachus*. I should deem myself presumptuous, as a young man, in offering advice, were it not addressed to one still younger. Mr. T. has the greatest difficulties to encounter; but in conquering them he will find employment—in having conquered them—his reward. I know too well the “ scribbler’s scoff, the critic’s contumely,” and I am afraid time will teach Mr. T. to know them better. Those who succeed and those who do not must bear this alike, and it is hard to say which have most of it. I trust that Mr. TOWNSEND’s share will be from envy; he will soon know mankind well enough not to attribute this expression to malice.

The above note was written before the author was apprised of Mr. CUMBERLAND’s death.

Still to the midst of things he hastens on,
As if we witnessed all already done ;
Leaves on his path whatever seems too mean
To raise the subject or adorn the scene ;
Gives, as each page improves upon the sight,
Not smoke from brightness, but from darkness light,
And truth and fiction with such art compounds,
We know not where to fix their several bounds.

In not disparaging this poem, however, next day, I could not refrain from expressing some surprise that he had written nothing else : upon which he told me that he had occasionally written short poems, besides a great many stanzas in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited. "They are not worth troubling you with, but you shall have them all with you if you like." So came I by *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. He took it from a small trunk, with a number of verses. He said they had been read but by one person, who had found very little to commend, and much to condemn : that he himself was of

that opinion, and he was sure I should be so too. Such as it was, however, it was at my service; but he was urgent that "The Hints from Horace" should be immediately put in train, which I promised to have done. How much he was mistaken as to my opinion, the following letter shows. He was going next morning to Harrow for a few days, but I was so delighted with his poem that I could not refrain from writing to him that very evening, the 16th of July.

" You have written one of the most delightful poems I ever read. If I wrote this in flattery, I should deserve your contempt rather than your friendship. Remember, I depend upon your considering me superior to it. I have been so fascinated with Childe Harold, that I have not been able to lay it down. I would almost pledge my life on its advancing the reputa-

tion of your poetical powers, and of its gaining you great honour and regard, if you will do me the credit and favour of attending to my suggestions respecting some alterations and omissions which I think indispensable. Not a line do I mean to offer. I already know your sentiment on that point—all shall be your own; but in having the magnanimity to sacrifice some favourite stanzas, you will perhaps have a little trouble, though indeed but a little, in connecting the parts. I shall instantly put the poem into my nephew's hands to copy it precisely; and I hope, on Friday or Saturday morning, to take my breakfast with you, as I did this morning. It is long since I spent two hours so agreeably—not only your kind expressions as to myself, but the marked temperance of your mind, gave me extreme pleasure."

Attentive as he had hitherto been to my

opinions and suggestions, and natural as it was that he should be swayed by such decided praise, I was surprised to find that I could not at first obtain credit with Lord Byron for my judgment on Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. "It was any thing but poetry—it had been condemned by a good critic—had I not myself seen the sentences on the margins of the manuscript?" He dwelt upon the paraphrase of the Art of Poetry with pleasure; and the manuscript of that was given to Cawthorn, the publisher of the Satire, to be brought forth without delay. I did not, however, leave him so: before I quitted him I returned to the charge, and told him that I was so convinced of the merit of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, that as he had given it to me, I should certainly publish it, if he would have the kindness to attend to some corrections and alterations.

He at length seemed impressed by my

perseverance, and took the poem into consideration. He was at first unwilling to alter or omit any of the stanzas, but they could not be published as they stood. Besides several weak and ludicrous passages, unworthy of the poem, there were some of an offensive nature, which, on reflection, his own feelings convinced him could not with propriety be allowed to go into the world. These he undertook to curtail and soften; but he persisted in preserving his philosophical, free-thinking stanzas, relative to death. I had much friendly, but unsuccessful contest with him on that point, and I was obliged to be satisfied with the hypothetical but most beautiful stanza—

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore, &c.

which, in the course of our contention, he sent me, to be inserted after the sceptical

stanzas in the beginning of the Second Canto. He also sacrificed to me some harsh political reflections on the Government, and a ludicrous stanza or two which I thought injured the poem. I did all I could to raise his opinion of this composition, and I succeeded; but he varied much in his feelings about it, nor was he, as will appear, at his ease, until the world decided on its merit. He said again and again, that I was going to get him into a scrape with his old enemies, and that none of them would rejoice more than the Edinburgh Reviewers at an opportunity to humble him. He said I must not put his name to it. I entreated him to leave it to me, and that I would answer for this poem silencing all his enemies.

The publication of it being determined upon, my first thought respecting a publisher was to give it to Cawthorn, as it appeared to me right that he should have

it who had done so well with the Poet's former work ; but Cawthorn did not then rank high among the brethren of the trade. I found that this had been instilled into Lord Byron's ear since his return to England, probably at Harrow. I was sorry for it ; for instead of looking for fashionable booksellers, he should, as Pope did, have made his bookseller the most fashionable one, and this he could easily have done. He thought more modestly of himself, and said he wished I would offer it to Miller, of Albermarle-street. "Cawthorn had *The Hints from Horace*—he always meant them for him, and the Poems had better be published by different booksellers." I could not accord in the opinion, but I yielded of course to his wish. It was but a step ; I carried it up to Miller, and left it with him, enjoining him the strictest secrecy as to the author. In a few days, by appointment, I called again to know his decision.

He declined publishing it. He noticed all my objections; his critic had pointed them out; but his chief objection he stated to be the manner in which Lord Elgin was treated in the poem. He was his bookseller and publisher. When I reported this to Lord Byron, his scruples and apprehensions of injuring his fame returned; but I overcame them, and he gave me leave to publish with whom I pleased, requesting me only to keep in mind what he had said as to Cawthorn, and also the refusal of Longman's house to publish his Satire. Next to these I wished to oblige Mr. Murray, who had then a shop opposite St. Dunstan's church, in Fleet-street. Both he and his father before him had published for myself. He had expressed to me his regret that I did not carry him the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. But this was after its success—I think he would have refused it in its embryo state. After

Lord Byron's arrival, I had met him, and he said he wished I would obtain some work of his Lordship's for him. I now had it in my power, and I put Childe Harold's Pilgrimage into his hands, telling him that Lord Byron had made me a present of it ; and that I expected that he would make a very liberal agreement with me for it. He took some days to consider, during which time he consulted his literary advisers, among whom, no doubt, was Mr. Gifford, who was the Editor of the Quarterly Review. That Mr. Gifford gave a favourable opinion I afterwards learned from Mr. Murray himself ; but the objections I have stated stared him in the face, and he was kept in suspense between the desire of possessing a work of Lord Byron's, and the fear of an unsuccessful speculation. We came to this conclusion ; that he should print, at his expense, a handsome quarto edition, the profits of which I should share

equally with him, and that the agreement for the copyright should depend upon the success of this edition. When I told this to Lord Byron he was highly pleased, but still doubted the copyright being worth my acceptance ; promising, however, if the poem went through the edition to give me other poems to annex to Childe Harold. These preliminaries being settled, I persisted in my attacks on the objectionable parts of this delightful work, now formally become mine. He wrote an introductory stanza, for the second originally stood first, polished some lines, and became in general far more condescending and compliant than I ever flattered myself I should find him ; which I attributed to his clearly perceiving how sincerely I loved him. Finding that I could gain nothing in respect to the sceptical stanzas, the conciliatory one I have already mentioned not having been written at that time, I drew up a regular *protest*

against them, and enclosed it to him in a short letter just before he left town, which departure, though always intended to be soon, was at last, very sudden, in consequence of an express from Newstead Abbey, by which he was informed that his mother's life was despaired of, and urged to lose no time in coming to the Abbey. He instantly set off post with four horses, but, alas ! she did not live to embrace him.

“ Within is my formal *protest* against the sceptical stanzas of your poem. You have seen no symptoms of a Puritan in me; I have seen none of a Scoffer in you.—You, I know, can endure my sincerity; I should be sorry if I could not appreciate yours. You have the uncommon virtue of not being anxious to make others think as you do on religious topics; I, less disinterested, have the greatest desire, not without great hope, that you may one day think as I do.”

ENCLOSURE.

The Protest of R. C. Dallas against certain Sceptical Stanzas in the Poem entitled Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

Dissentient—

Because—Although among feeble and corrupt men religions may take their turn; although Jupiter and Mahomet, and error after error, may enter the brain of misguided mortals, it does not follow that there is not a true religion, or that the incense of the heart ascends in vain, or that the faith of a Christian is built on reeds.

Because—Although bound for a term to the earth, it is natural to hope, and rational to expect, existence in another world; since, if it be not so, the noblest attributes of God, justice and goodness, must be subtracted from our ideas of the great Creator; and although our senses make us acquainted

with the chemical decomposition of our bodies, it does not follow that he who has power to create has not power to raise ; or that he who had the will to give life and hope of immortality, has not the will to fulfil his virtual, not to say actual, promise.

Because—Although a skull well affords a subject for moralizing; although in its worm-eaten, worm-disdained state, it is so far from being a temple worthy of a God, that it is unworthy of the creature whom it once served as the recess of wisdom and of wit ; and although no saint, sage, or sophist can refit it,—it does not follow that God's power is limited, or that what is sown in corruption may not be raised in incorruption, that what is sown a natural body may not be raised a spiritual body.

Because—The same authority, Socrates, cited to prove how unequal the human intellect is to fathom the designs of Omnipotence and Omnipotence, is one of the

strongest in favour of the immortality of the soul.

Because—Although there is good sense and a kind intention expressed in these words:—“I am no sneerer at thy phantasy,” “Thou pitiest me, alas! I envy thee,”—and “I ask thee not to prove a Saducee;” yet the intention is counteracted by the sentiments avowed, and the example published, by which the young and the wavering may be detained in the wretchedness of doubt, or confirmed in the despair of unbelief.

Because—I think of the author of the poem as Pope did of Garth, of whom he said, “Garth is a christian, and does not know it.” Consequently, I think that he will, one day, be sorry for publishing such opinions.

CHAPTER VI.

OPINIONS AND FEELINGS OF LORD BYRON
AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER.

AT every step which I take in my task of submitting to the public my Recollections of Lord Byron, I feel a deeper regret at the unfortunate necessity which deprives them of his Correspondence. The letters, which I received from him while he was at Newstead, give a complete picture of his mind, under circumstances peculiarly calculated to call forth its most interesting features. Our correspondence was kept up without interruption. Upon arriving at Newstead he found that his mother had breathed her last. He suffered much from this loss, and the disappointment of not seeing her before her death; and

while his feelings were still very acute, within a few days of his arrival at the Abbey, he received the intelligence that Mr. M***, a very intimate friend of his friend Mr. Hobhouse, and one whom he highly estimated himself, had been drowned in the Cam. He had not long before heard of the death of his schoolfellow, Wingfield, at Coimbra, to whom he was much attached. He wrote me an account of these events in a short but affecting letter. They had all died within a month, he having just heard from all three, but seen none. The letter from Mr. M*** had been written the day previous to his death. He could not restore them by regret, and therefore, with a sigh to the departed, he struggled to return to the heavy routine of life, in the sure expectation that all would one day have their repose. He felt that his grief was selfish. He wished to think upon any subject except death—he was satiated with that. Having always four skulls

in his library, he could look on them without emotion ; but he could not allow his imagination to take off the fleshy covering from those of his friends, without a horrible sensation ; and he thought that the Romans were right in burning their deceased friends. I wrote to him, and said :

“ On my return home last night, I received your letter, which renewed in my mind some of the most painful ideas which for many years accompanied me, or took place of all others ; which, in spite of Philosophy, and, yes, my lord, in spite of Religion, rendered my life wretched ; and which time, in bringing me nearer to eternity, has softened to such a degree, that they are now far from being painful. But you deprecate the subject, and I will not enlarge upon it, though one I take some delight in. You have, indeed, had enough within a very short time, to make you prefer any other : yet I

must not lose the opportunity of saying once more, what I imagine may have been said a thousand times before, that is, how cruel a present is a reflecting mind, if all existence terminates with life! I feel much for your friend Hobhouse. I supposed him embarked for Ireland, *en militaire*, at the time that I saw the account of Mr. M***'s fate in the papers. Resignation, I must own, is a difficult virtue when the heart is deeply affected—at the same time, it is the part of every man of sense to cultivate it, and to be indebted for it rather to his reason, or his religion, than to the influence of time. I condemn myself, perhaps; but the argument may be of service to strong and active minds. With respect to your friend Wingfield, it must be some consolation to you to have consecrated his memory in the stanzas you have since inserted in your Poem; and if there should be a meeting hereafter, as alluded to by the half-hoping stanza which

you have added, let me flatter myself to please me, the pleasure with him will not be a little heightened by that memorial.

The funeral pile, the ashes preserved by the asbestos, and inurned, are circumstances more pleasing to the imagination than a box, a hole, and worms ; but when the vivifying principle has ceased to act, let me say, when the soul is separated from the chemical elements which constitute body, Reason says it is of little importance what becomes of them. Even in burning, we cannot save all the body from mixing with other natures : by the flames much is carried off into the atmosphere, and falls again to the earth to fertilize it, and sustain worms. Nay, in the entombed box, perhaps, the dust is at last more purely preserved ; for though, in the course of decomposition, it gives a temporary existence to a loathsome creature, yet, in time, the rioted worm dies too, and gives back to the mass

of dust the share of substance which it borrowed for its own form. I am afraid this language borders on the subject I meant to avoid."

Lord Byron disclaimed the acuteness of feeling I attributed to him, because, though he certainly felt unhappy, he was nevertheless attacked by a kind of hysterical merriment, or rather a laughing without merriment, which he could neither understand nor overcome, and which gave him no relief, while a spectator would think him in good spirits. He frequently talked of M*** as of a person of gigantic intellect—he could by no language do justice to his abilities—all other men were pygmies to him. He loved Wingfield indeed more—he was an earlier and a dearer friend, and one whom he could never regret loving—but in talent he knew no equal to M***. In him he had to mourn the loss of a guide, philo-

sopher; and friend, while in Wingfield he lost a friend only, though one before whom he could have wished to have gone his long journey. Lord Byron's language concerning Mr. M*** was equally strong and remarkable. He affirmed that it was not in the mind of those who did not know him, to conceive such a man; that his superiority was too great to excite envy—that he was awed by him—that there was the *mark of an immortal creature in whatever he did*, and yet he was gone—that such a man should have been given over to death, so early in life, bewildered him. In referring to the honours M*** acquired at the University, he declared that nevertheless he was a most confirmed atheist, *indeed offensively so*, for he did not scruple to avow his opinions in all companies.

Once only did Lord Byron ever express, in distinct terms to me, a direct attack upon the tenets of the Christian Reli-

gion ; I postponed my answer, saying upon this I had much to write to him. He afterwards reminded me of my having said so, but, at the same time, begged me not to enter upon metaphysics, upon which he never could agree with me. In answering him, I said, " If I have not written the much with which I have threatened you, it has been owing, not solely to my avocations, but partly to a consciousness of my subject being too weighty for me, and not adapted to a hasty discussion. A passage in your letter of the 7th of this month, beginning : ' Are you aware that your religion is impious ? ' &c., incited me to a determination, in spite of the indolence I begin to feel on argumentative topics, to call you a *purblind philosopher*, and to break a lance with you in defence of a cause on which I rest so much hope. I still dread that my feebleness may be laid to the account, and esteemed the feebleness of the cause itself.

“ By proposing to drop metaphysics you cut down *the much* I meditated. I will not pursue them at present, though I think them the prime subjects of intellectual enjoyment. But, though I drop my point, instead of couching my lance, I do not mean to say that I will not yet try my strength. Meanwhile, though neither Mr. H **’s glow, nor my fervour, has wrought conviction hitherto ; this I am sure of, that you will not shut your mind against it, whenever your understanding begins to feel ground to rest upon. I compare such philosophers as you, and Hume, and Gibbon, (—I have put you into company that you are not ashamed of—) to mariners wrecked at sea, buffeting the waves for life, and at last carried by a current towards land, where, meeting with rugged and perpendicular rocks, they decide that it is impossible to land, and, though some of their companions point out a firm

beach, exclaim—‘ Deluded things ! there can be no beach, unless you melt down these tremendous rocks—no, our ship is wrecked, and to the bottom we must go—all we have to do is to swim on, till Fate overwhelms us.’—You do not deny the depravity of the human race—well, that is one step gained—it is allowing that we are cast away—it is, figuratively, our shipwreck. Behold us, then, all scattered upon the ocean, and *all* anxious to be saved—all, at least, willing to be on *terra firma*; the Humes, the Gibbons, the Voltaires, as well as the Newtons, the Lockes, the Johnsons, &c. The latter make for the beach; the former exhaust their strength about the rocks, and sink, declaring them insurmountable. The incarnation of a Deity ! vicarious atonement ! the innocent suffering for the guilty ! the seeming inconsistencies of the Old Testament, and the dis-

crepancies of the new ! &c. &c. ! are rocks which I am free to own are not easily melted down ; but I am certain that they may be viewed from a point on the beach in less deterring forms, lifting their heads into the clouds indeed, yet adding sublimity to the prospect of the shores on which we have landed, and by no means impeding our progress upon it. In less metaphorical language, my lord, it appears to me, that freethinkers are generally more eager to strengthen their objections than solicitous for conviction ; and prefer wandering into proud inferences, to pursuing the evidences of facts ; so contrary to the example given to us in all judicial investigations, where testimony precedes reasoning, and is the ground of it. The corruption of human nature being self-evident, it is very natural to inquire the cause of that corruption, and as natural to hope that there may be a re-

medy for it. The cause and the remedy have been stated.

" How are we to ascertain the truth of them? Not by arguing mathematically, but by first examining the proofs adduced; and if they are satisfactory, to use our reasoning powers, as far as they will go, to clear away the difficulties which may attend them. This is the only mode of investigating with any hope of conviction. It is, to return to my metaphor, the beach on which we may find a footing, and be able to look around us; on which breach, I trust, I shall one day or other see you taking your stand. I have done—and pray observe, that I have kept my word—I have not entered on metaphysics on the subject of Revelation. I have merely stated the erroneous proceeding of freethinking Philosophy; and, on the other hand, the natural and rational proceeding of the mind in the inquiry after truth:

—the conviction must, and I am confident will, be the operation of your own mind.”

Lord Byron noticed, indeed, what I had written, but in a very discouraging manner. He would have nothing to do with the subject—we should all go down together, he said, “ So,” quoting St. Paul, “ let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;”—he felt satisfied in his creed, for it was better to sleep than to wake.

Such were the opinions which occasionally manifested themselves in this unhappy young man, and which gave me a degree of pain proportioned to the affection I could not but feel for him; while my hopes of his ultimately breaking from the trammels of infidelity, which were never relinquished, received from time to time fresh excitement from some expressions that appeared to me to have an opposite tendency. He frequently recurred to his

playful raillery upon the subject of my co-operation in the murder, as he called it, of poor Blackett. Upon one occasion, he mentioned him in opposition to Kirke White, whom, setting aside what he called his bigotry, he classed with Chatterton. He expressed wonder that White was so little known at Cambridge, where he said nobody knew any thing about him until his death. He added, that for himself, he should have taken pride in making his acquaintance, and that his very prejudices were calculated to render him respectable. Such occasional expressions as these, in spite of the inconsistency which they displayed, furnished food for my hope that I should one day see him sincerely embracing Christianity, and escaping from the vortex of the Atheistical society, in which, having entered at all, it was only wonderful to me that he was so moderate in his expressions as in general he had hitherto been. He

told me that both his friend, Juvenal Hodgson, and myself, had beset him upon the subject of religion, and that my warmth was nothing, compared to his fire—his reward would surely be great in heaven, he said, if he were half as careful in the matter of his own salvation, as he was voluntarily anxious concerning his friends. Lord Byron added, that he gave honour to us both, but conviction to neither.

The mention of Kirke White brought to his mind an embryo epic poet who was at Cambridge, Mr. Townsend, who had published the plan and specimen of a work, to be called “Armageddon.” Lord Byron’s opinion of this is already given in his own note, to a line in his Hints from Horace (see page 111); but in referring to him, he thought that perhaps his anticipating the Day of Judgment was too presumptuous—it seemed something like instructing the Lord

what he should do, and might put a captious person in mind of the line,

“ And fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

This he said, without wishing to cavil himself, but other people would; he nevertheless hoped, that Mr. Townsend would complete his work, in spite of Milton.

Lord Byron's moral feelings were sometimes evinced in a manner which the writings and opinions of his later life render remarkable. When he was abroad, he was informed that the son of one of his tenants had seduced a respectable young person in his own station in life. On this he expressed his opinion very strongly. Although he felt it impossible strictly to perform what he conceived our first duty, to abstain from doing harm, yet he thought our second duty was to exert all our power to repair the harm we may have done. In the particular case in question, the parties

ought forthwith to marry, as they were in equal circumstances—if the girl had been the inferior of the seducer, money would be even then an insufficient compensation. He would not sanction in his tenants what he would not do himself. He had, indeed, *as God knew*, committed many excesses, but as he had determined to amend, and latterly kept to his determination, this young man must follow his example. He insisted that the seducer should restore the unfortunate girl to society.

The manner in which Lord Byron expressed his particular feelings respecting his own life, was melancholy to a painful degree. At one time, he said, that he was about to visit Cambridge, but that M *** was gone, and Hobhouse was also absent; and except the person who had invited him, there was scarcely any to welcome him. From this his thoughts fell into a gloomy channel—he was alone in the world, and

only three-and-twenty ; he could be no more than alone, when he should have nearly finished his course ; he had, it was true, youth to begin again with, but he had no one with whom to call back the laughing period of his existence. He was struck with the singular circumstance that few of his friends had had a quiet death ; but a quiet life, he said, was more important. He afterwards acknowledged that he felt his life had been altogether opposed to propriety, and even decency ; and that it was now become a dreary blank, with his friends gone, either by death or estrangement.

While he was still continuing at Newstead, he wrote me a letter, which affected me deeply, upon the occasion of another death with which he was shocked—he lost one whom he had dearly loved in the more smiling season of his earlier youth ; but he quoted—“ I have almost forgot the taste of grief, and supped full of horrors.” He

could not then weep for an event which a few years before would have overwhelmed him. He appeared to be afflicted in youth, he thought, with the greatest unhappiness of old age, to see those he loved fall about him, and stand solitary before he was withered. He had not, like others, domestic resources; and his internal anticipations gave him no prospect in time or in eternity, except the selfish gratification of living longer than those who were better. At this period he expressed great wretchedness; but he turned from himself, and knowing that I was contemplating a retirement into the country, he proposed a plan for me, dictated by great kindness of heart, by which I was the more sensibly touched, as it occupied his mind at such a moment. He wished me to settle in the little town of Southwell, the particulars of which he explained to me. Upon these subjects I wrote to him as follows, on the 27th of October.

" Your letter of the 11th made such an impression upon me, that I felt as if I had a volume to say upon it ; yet, it is but too true, that the sensibility which vents itself in many words carries with it the appearance of affectation, and hardly ever pleases in real life. The few sentences of your letter relative to the death of friends, and to your feelings, excited in my mind no common degree of sympathy ; but I must be content to express it in a common way, and briefly.

Death has, indeed, begun to draw your attention very early. I hardly knew what it was, or thought of it till I went at the age of five-and-twenty to reside in the West Indies, and there he began to show himself to me frequently. My friends, young and old, were carried to the grave with a rapidity that astonished me, and I was myself in a manner snatched out of his grasp. This, and the other sad concomitants of a West

Indian existence, determined me to adopt, at whatever loss, any alternative by which I might plant my family in England. Here I have grown old without seeing much of him near me, though when he has approached me it has been in his most dreadful form. I am led to these recollections from comparing your experience at three-and-twenty with mine long after that age. Your losses, and in a country where health and life have more stable foundations than in torrid climates, have been extraordinary ; and that too within the limit, I believe, of one or two years. I thank you for your confidential communication at the bottom of the stanza which so much delighted me. How truly do I wish that the being to whom that verse now belongs had lived, and lived yours ! What your obligations to her would have been in that case is inconceivable ; and, as it is, what a gratification would it be to me to believe, that in

her death she has left you indebted to her ;
to believe that these lines

‘ Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast’—

are not merely the glow of a poetic imagination, nor the fleeting inspiration of sorrow ; but a well-founded hope, leading to the persuasion that there is another and a better world.

Your reflections on the forlorn state of your existence are very painful, and very strongly expressed. I confess I am at a loss how to preach comfort. It would be very easy for me to resort to commonplaces, and refer you to study and the enjoyment of the intellect ; but I know too well that happiness must find its abode in the heart, and not in the head. Voltaire, who you know is no apostle with me, expresses this pleasingly :

‘ Est-il donc vrai, grands Dieux! il ne faut plus que
j'aime !

La foule des beaux arts, dont je veux tour a tour
Remplir le vuide de moi-même,
N'est point encore assez pour remplacer l'amour.’

He evidently means *love*, emphatically so called; but kind affections of every nature are sources of happiness, and more lasting ones than that violent flame, which, like the pure air of the chemist, when separated from common air, intoxicates, and accelerates the term of its existence. Those affections are the only remedy I see for you. The more you lose, the more should you strive to repair your losses. At your age the door of friendship cannot be shut; but man, and woman too, is imperfect: you must make allowances, and though human nature is in a sad state, there are many worthy of your regard. I am certain you may yet go through life surrounded by friends,—real friends, not—

' —— Flatterers of the festal hour,
The heartless parasites of present cheer.'

I am truly sorry for the wretchedness you are suffering, and the more, because I am certain of your not having any pathetic cant in your character. But while I think you have reason to be unhappy, I confide in the strength of your understanding, to get the better of the evils of life, and to enter upon a new pursuit of happiness. You see the volume will come, but believe me it comes from the heart.

I thank you most kindly for that part of your letter which relates to my purposed retirement into the country. You judge rightly that I should not wish to be entirely out of society, but my bent on this head is more on account of my family than myself; for I could live alone, that is alone with them. I often avoid company; but it has been one of the greatest pleasures of my life to see them coveted in society. Your

account of Southwell delights me ; and the being within reach of the metropolis would of itself outweigh the charm of the *picturesque*, though a charm, and a great one, it has. The being within a ride of you, however, is the decisive attraction. I will, then, from this time keep Southwell in view for my retreat, and at a future day we will take our flight. I am going to dine with the Ionian to-day. He and Mrs. Wright carried me off suddenly last night to the Haymarket to see Mathews, who performs no more in London this winter, for which I am sorry, as I am meditating another ordeal at the Lyceum, in which he might have been of use to me. Mr. Wright feels himself honoured in your desire of being personally acquainted with him, and I shall be proud of being the introducer of such friends. You think, no doubt, that I have communicated your poem to him, and you would not do me justice if you thought

otherwise. He is the most intimate friend I have, though many years younger than myself. We accord very generally in our opinions, and we do not differ as to *Childe Harold*. I meant to say something about the progress of the Poem, but I must postpone it. May peace and happiness await you."

CHAPTER VII.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE, WHILE IN THE
PRESS.

IT was not without great difficulty that I could induce Lord Byron to allow his new poem to be published with his name. He dreaded that the old enmity of the critics in the north which had been envenomed by his Satire, as well as the Southern scribblers, whom he had equally enraged, would overwhelm his "Pilgrimage." This was his first objection—his second was, that he was anxious the world should not fix upon himself the character of Childe Harold. Nevertheless he said, if Mr. Murray positively required his name, and I agreed with him in opinion, he would venture; and there-

fore he wished it to be given as “ By the Author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.” He promised to give me some smaller poems to put at the end; and though he originally intended his Remarks on the Romaic to be printed with the Hints from Horace, he felt they would more aptly accompany the Pilgrimage. He had kept no journals while abroad, but he meant to manufacture some notes from his letters to his mother. The advertisement which he originally intended to be prefixed to the poem was something different from the preface that appeared. The paragraph beginning “ a Fictitious Character is introduced, for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece, which, however, makes no pretensions to regularity,”—was continued thus at first, but was afterwards altered.

“ It has been suggested to me by friends,

on whose opinions I set a high value, that in the fictitious character of ‘Childe Harold,’ I may incur the suspicion of having drawn ‘from myself.’ This I beg leave once for all to disclaim. I wanted a character to give some connexion to the poem, and the one adopted suited my purpose as well as any other. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such an idea; but in the main points, I should hope none whatever. My reader will observe, that when the author speaks in his own person, he assumes a very different tone from that of

‘The cheerless thing, the man without a friend.’

I crave pardon for this egotism, which proceeds from my wish to discard any probable imputation of it to the text.”

This it appears had been written before the death of his mother, and his mournful

sojourn at Newstead afterwards. It was during that period that he sent me the advertisement, upon which he had interlined after his quotation of

“The cheerless thing, the man without a friend,”
“at least till death had deprived him of
his nearest connexions.”

While Childe Harold was preparing to be put into the printer’s hands, Lord Byron was very anxious for the speedy appearance of the Imitation of Horace, with which Cawthorn was desirous of proceeding with all despatch, but which I was nevertheless most desirous of retarding at least, if not of suppressing altogether. Lord Byron wrote to me from Newstead several times upon the subject. I forbore to reply until I could send him the first proof of the Pilgrimage, when I wrote the following.

“I saw Murray yesterday—if he has adhered to his intention, you will receive

a proof of ‘Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage’ before this letter. I am delighted with its appearance. Allowing you to be susceptible of the pleasure of genuine praise, you would have had a fine treat could you have been in the room with the ring of Gyges on your finger, while we were discussing the publication of the Poem; not, perhaps, from what I or Mr. Murray said, but from what he reported to have been said by *Aristarchus*, into whose hands the ‘Childe’ had somehow fallen between the time of Murray’s absence and return; at least, so sayeth the latter. This happening unknown to you, and, indeed, contrary to your intention, removes every idea of courting applause; but, it is not a little gratifying to *me* to know that what struck me on the first perusal to be admirable, has also forcibly struck Mr. Gifford. Of your Satire he spoke highly; but this Poem he pronounces, not only the best you have written,

but equal to any of the present age, allowing, however, for its being unfinished, which he regrets. Murray assured me, that he expressed himself very warmly. With the fiat of such a judge, will not your muse be kindled to the completion of a work, that would, if completed, irrevocably fix your fame? In your short preface you talk of adding concluding Cantos, if encouraged by public approbation: this is no longer necessary, for if Gifford approve who shall disapprove? In my last I begged you to devote some of your time to finishing this Poem, which I am proud of having instigated you to give precedence before your ‘Horatian Hints.’ I may now repeat my request with tenfold weight. You have ample time, for this is not the season for publishing, and it will be all the better for proceeding slowly through the press. How pleasantly then may you overtake yourself; and, with some little sacrifices of opinion,

give the world a work that shall delight it, and at once set at defiance the pack of waspish curs that take pleasure in barking at you. As for the subject it will grow under your hands—your letters to your mother will bring recollections not only for notes but for the verse.—Greece is a never-failing stream—then the voyage home, the approach to England, the death (for the not identifying yourself with the travelling Childe is a wish not possible to realize) of friends, and particularly of your mother before you saw her; lastly, the scenes on your return to the ‘vast and venerable pile,’ with the Childe’s resolution of taking his part earnestly in that assembly where his birth, by giving him a place, calls upon him to devote his time and talents to the good of his country. My eagerness carries me, perhaps, too far—I would give any thing to see you shining at once as a poet and a legislator. With re-

spect to the sacrifice of opinion, I must explain myself: I am neither so absurd nor so indelicate as to express a wish that a man of understanding should profess ought that is not supported by his own convictions. But, not to proclaim loudly opinions by which general feelings are harrowed, and which cannot possibly be attended with any good to the proclaimer,—on the contrary, most likely with much injury,—is not only compatible with the best understanding, but is in some measure the result of it. Mr. Murray thinks that your sceptical stanzas will injure the circulation of your work. I will not dissemble that I am *not* of his opinion—I suspect it will rather sell the better for them: but I am of opinion, my dear Lord Byron, that they will hurt *you*; that they will prove new stumbling-blocks in your road of life. At three and twenty, oh! deign to court, what you may most honourably court, the general suffrage

of your country. It is a pleasure that will travel with you through the long portion of life you have now before you: It is not subject to that satiety which so frequently attends most other pleasures. Live you must, and many, many years; and that suffrage would be nectar and ambrosia to your mind for all the time you live. To gain it, you have little more to do than show that you wish it; and to abstain from outraging the sentiments, prepossessions, or, if you will, prejudices of those who form the generally estimable part of the community. *Your boyhood* has been marked with some eccentricities, but at three and twenty what may you not do? Your Poem, when I first read it, and it is the same now, appeared to me an inspiration to draw forth a glorious finish. Yield a little to gain a great deal; what a foundation may you now lay for lasting fame, and love, and honour! What jewels to have in your grasp! I

beseech you, seize the opportunity. I am glad you have agreed to appear in the title-page. It is impossible to remain an instant unknown as the author, or to separate the Pilgrim from the Traveller. This being the case, I am convinced that your name alone is far preferable to giving it under your description as “the author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;” because, in the first place, your rank dignifies the page, whilst the execution of the work reflects no common lustre on your rank; and, in the next place, you avoid appearing to challenge your old foes, which you would be considered as doing by announcing the author as their Satirist; and certainly your best defiance of them in future will be never to notice either their censure or their praise. You will observe that the introductory stanza which you sent me is not printed: Mr. Murray had not received it when this sheet was printed as a specimen:

it will be easily put into its place. As you read *the proofs* you will, perhaps, find a line here and there which wants polishing, and a word which may be advantageously changed. If any strike me I shall, without hesitation, point them out for your consideration. In page 7, four lines from the bottom,

‘ Yet deem *him* not from this *with* breast of *steel*,’

is not only rough to the ear, but the phrase appears to me inaccurate: the change of *him* to *ye*, and *with* to *his* might set it right. In the last line of the following stanza, page 8, you use the word *central*: I doubt whether even poetical license will authorize your extending the idea of your proposed voyage to seas beyond the equator, when the Poem no where shows that you had it in contemplation to cross, or even approach, within many degrees, the *Summer tropic line*. I am not sure, however,

that this is not hypercriticism, and it is almost a pity to alter so beautiful a line*. I believe I told you that my friend WALLER WRIGHT wrote an Ode for the Duke of Gloucester's Installation as Chancellor of the University at Cambridge. Some of the leading men of Granta have had it printed at the University Press. He has given me two copies, and begs I will make one of them acceptable to you, only observing that the motto was not of his chusing. I believe the sheet may be overweight for one frank, I shall therefore unsew it, and put it under two covers, not doubting that you will think it worthy of re-stitching when you receive it. I gave Murray your note on M***, to be placed in the page with Wingfield. He must have been a very extraordinary young man,

* It is true the travellers did not cross the line, but before Lord Byron left England, India had been thought of.

and I am sincerely sorry for H**, for whom I have felt an increased regard ever since I heard of his intimacy with my son at Cadiz, and that they were mutually pleased. I lent his miscellany the other day to Wright, who speaks highly of the poetical talent displayed in it. I will search again for the lofty genius you ascribe to Kirke White : I cannot help thinking I have allowed him all his merit. I agree that there was much cant in his religion, sincere as he was. This is a pity, for religion has no greater enemy than cant. As to genius, surely he and Chatterton ought not to be named in the same day ; but, as I said, I will look again. I do not know how Blackett's posthumous stock goes off ; I have not seen or heard from Pratt since you left town. Be that, however, as it may, I still boldly deny being in any degree accessory to his murder.—George Byron left us in the beginning of the week.”

" P.S. Casting my eyes again over the printed stanzas, something struck me to be amiss in the last line but one of page 6—

' Nor sought *a* friend to counsel or condole.'

From the context I think you must have written, or meant,—I have not the MS.—

' Nor sought *he* friend,' &c.

otherwise grammar requires—' Or seeks a friend,' &c.

These are straws on the surface, easily skimmed off."

Previous to receiving this letter, Lord Byron had written to Mr. Murray, forbidding him to show the manuscript of *Childe Harold* to Mr. Gifford, though he had no objection to letting it be seen by any one else; and he was exceedingly angry when he found that his instructions had come too late. He was afraid that Mr. Gifford would

think it a trap to extort his applause, or a hint to get a favourable review of it in the *Quarterly*. He was very anxious to remove any impression of this kind that might have remained on his mind. His praise, he said, meant nothing, for he could do no other than be civil to a man who had extolled him in every possible manner. His expressions about Mr. Murray's deserts for such an obsequious squeezing out of approbation, and depreciation of censure, were quaint, and though strong, were amusing enough. Still, however, the praise, all unmeaning as he seemed to consider it, had the effect of strengthening my arguments concerning the delay of the "Hints from Horace;" and when, in a letter soon afterwards, I said, "Cawthorn's business detains him in the North, and I will manage to detain the 'Hints,' first from, and then in, the press—'the Romaunt' shall come forth first," I found, so far from opposing my

intention, he concurred with and forwarded it. He acknowledged that I was right, and begged me to manage, so that Cawthorn should not get the start of Murray in the publication of the two works.

I cannot express the great anxiety I felt to prevent Lord Byron from publicly committing himself, as holding decidedly sceptical opinions. There were several stanzas which showed the leaning of his mind; but, in one, he openly acknowledged his disbelief of a future state; and against this I made my stand. I urged him by every argument I could devise, not to allow it to appear in print; and I had the great gratification of finding him yield to my entreaties, if not to my arguments. It has, alas! become of no importance, that these lines should be published to the world —they are exceedingly moderate compared to the blasphemy with which his suicidal pen has since blackened the fame that I

was so desirous of keeping fair, till the time came when he should love to have it fair—a period to which I fondly looked forward, as not only possible, but near. The original stanza ran thus—

“ Frown not upon me, churlish Priest ! that I
Look not for life, where life may never be;
I am no sneerer at thy Phantasy ;
Thou pitiest me,—alas ! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea,
Of happy isles and happier tenants there ;
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee.
Still dream of Paradise, thou know’st not where,
But lov’st too well to bid thine erring brother share.

The stanza that he at length sent me to substitute for this, was that beautiful one—

“ Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore,
How sweet it were in concert to adore,

With those who made our mortal labours light !
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more !
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian Sage, and all who taught the
right !”

The stanza which follows this, (the 9th of the 2d Canto), and which applies the subject of it to the death of a person for whom he felt affection, was written subsequently, when the event to which he alludes took place ; and was sent to me only just in time to have it inserted. He made a slight alteration in it, and enclosed me another copy, from which the fac-simile is taken that accompanies this volume.

As a note to the stanzas upon this subject, beginning with the 3d, and continuing to the 9th, Lord Byron had originally written a sort of prose apology for his opinions ; which he sent to me for consideration, whether it did not appear more like an attack than a defence of religion, and had

therefore better be left out. I had no hesitation in advising its omission, though for the reasons above stated, I now insert it here.

“ In this age of bigotry, when the puritan and priest have changed places, and the wretched catholic is visited with the ‘ sins of his fathers,’ even unto generations far beyond the pale of the commandment, the cast of opinion in these stanzas will doubtless meet with many a contemptuous anathema. But let it be remembered, that the spirit they breathe is desponding, not sneering, scepticism ; that he who has seen the Greek and Moslem superstitions contending for mastery over the former shrines of Polytheism,—who has left in his own country ‘ Pharisees, thanking God that they are not like Publicans and Sinners,’ and Spaniards in theirs, abhorring the Heretics, who have holpen them in their need,—will be not a little bewildered, and begin to think, that as only one of them can be right,

they may most of them be wrong. With regard to morals, and the effect of religion on mankind, it appears, from all historical testimony, to have had less effect in making them love their neighbours, than inducing that cordial christian abhorrence between sectaries and schismatics. The Turks and Quakers are the most tolerant ; if an Infidel pays his heratch to the former ; he may pray how, when, and where he pleases ; and the mild tenets, and devout demeanour of the latter, make their lives the truest commentary on the Sermon of the Mount.”

This is a remarkable instance of false and weak reasoning, and affords a key to Lord Byron’s mind, which I shall take occasion to notice more particularly in my concluding chapter.

Lord Byron made a journey into Lancashire, and some little time elapsed before I

took advantage of his disposition to oblige me relative to the stanzas on the Convention at Cintra. He had always talked of war *en Philosophie*, and took pleasure in observing the faults of military leaders ; nor was he inclined to allow them even their merit, Bonaparte excepted. In these stanzas he had not only satirized the Convention, but introduced the names of the generals ludicrously. I therefore urged him warmly to omit them, and the more as the Duke of Wellington was then acquiring fresh laurels in the Peninsula. I began to make a copy of the letter which I wrote to him on the subject, but something happened to prevent my finishing it. I insert what I kept ; it is dated October 3, 1811.

“ The alteration of some *bitter stings* shall be made previous to the Stanza going to press. You say if I will point out the

Stanzas on Cintra I wish re-cast, you will send me an answer. We are now come to them, and I fear your answer. What language shall I adopt to persuade your Muse not to commit self-murder, or at least slash herself unnecessarily? She has not even the excuse of *Honorius* for the penance she imposes on herself, and must suffer. Politically speaking, indeed in every sense, great deeds should be allowed to efface slight errors. The Cintra Convention will do doubt be recorded; but shall a Byron's Muse spirit ink upon a hero? You admit that Wellesley has effaced his share in it; yet you will not let it be effaced. Were you to visit Tusculum, would it be a subject for a Stanza, that Cicero or some one of his family was marked with a vetch? But you may think that Sir Harry and Sir Hew have done nothing to efface the Cintra folly; still the subject is beneath your pen. It had its run among newspaper epigram-

matists, and your pen cannot raise it to the dignity of the Poem into which you introduce it. Let any judge read the 25th stanza, and say if it be worthy of the pen that wrote the Poem;—the same of the 26th, 27th, and 28th. The name of Byng, too, is grown sadly stale in allusion,

‘ And folks in office at the mention sweat ;’
*sweat** ! I beseech you, my dear Lord, to let the exquisite stanza which follows the 29th succeed the 23d †, &c. &c. &c.”

In consequence of this letter, Lord Byron consented to omit the 25th, 27th, and 28th stanzas, but retained the 24th, 26th, and 29th, making, however, some alterations in them. As his genius has now placed his fame so far above the possibility of being

* Printed as the 27th stanza.

† These references are to my MS. copy of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

injured by the production of an occasional inferior stanza, and as the succeeding glories of the Peninsular campaigns have completely thrown into shade the events alluded to, there can be no impropriety in now publishing, as literary curiosities, the three stanzas which were then properly omitted. The following are the six stanzas as they originally stood. Those appearing below, as 24, 26, 29, appeared in the Poem in an altered state, numbered there as 24, 25, 26, of the first Canto. The stanzas marked below, 25, 27, and 28, were those omitted:

XXIV.

Behold the hall, where chiefs were late convened !
Oh dome displeasing unto British eye !
With diadem hight foolscap, lo ! a fiend,
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe arrayed, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazoned glares a name spelt Wellesley,
And sundry signatures adown the roll,
Wherat the urchin points and laughs with all his soul.

XXV.

In golden characters right well design'd
First on the list appeareth one " Junot ;"
Then certain other glorious names we find ;
(Which rhyme compelleth me to place below)
Dull victors ! baffled by a vanquish'd foe,
Wheedled by conyngē tongues of laurels due,
Stand, worthy of each other, in a row—
Sirs Arthur, Harry, and the dizzard Hew
Dalrymple, seely wight, sore dupe of t'other tew.

XXVI.

Convention is the dwarfy demon styled
That foil'd the Knights in Marialva's dome :
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turned a nation's shallow joy to gloom.
For well I wot when first the news did come
That Vimiera's field by Gaul was lost,
For paragraph ne paper scarce had room,
Such Pæans teemed for our triumphant host
In Courier, Chronicle, and eke in Morning Post.

XXVII.

But when Convention sent his handy work
Pens, tongues, feet, hands, combined in wild uproar;
Mayor, Aldermen, laid down th' uplifted fork ;
The Bench of Bishops half forgot to snore ;

Stern Cobbett, who for one whole week forbore
 To question aught, once more with transport leap't,
 And bit his devilish quill agen, and swore
 With foe such treaty never should be kept.

Then burst the blatant* beast, and roar'd, and raged,
 and—slept!!!

XXVIII.

Thus unto heaven appealed the people ; heaven,
 Which loves the lieges of our gracious King,
 Decreed that ere our generals were forgiven,
 Inquiry should be held about the thing.

But mercy cloaked the babes beneath her wing ;
 And as they spared our foes so spared we them.
 (Where was the pity of our sires for Byng †?)
 Yet knaves, not idiots, should the law condemn.

Then triumph, gallant knights ! and bless your judges'
 phlegm.

* “ Blatant beast ;” a figure for the mob, I think first used by Smollett in his *Adventures of an Atom*. Horace has the “ Bellua multorum capitum ;” in England, fortunately enough, the illustrious mobility have not even *one*.

† By this query it is not meant that our foolish Generals should have been shot, but that Byng might have been spared, though the one suffered and the others escaped, probably, for Candide's reason, “ *pour encourager les autres.* ”

XXIX.

But ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra ! at thy name ;
And folks in office at the mention sweat,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.
How will posterity the deed proclaim !
Will not our own and fellow nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where scorn her finger points through many a coming
year.

To these stanzas was attached a long note, which though nothing but a wild tirade against the Portuguese, and the measures of government, and the battle of Talavera, I had great difficulty in inducing him to relinquish. I wrote him the following letter upon the subject:—

“ You sent me but few notes for the first Canto—there are a good many for the second. The only liberty I took with them was, if you will allow me to use the

expression, to *dove-tail* two of them, which, though connected in the sense and relative to the reference in the Poem, were disunited as they stood in your MS. I have omitted the passage respecting the Portuguese, which fell with the alteration you made in the stanzas relative to Cintra, and the insertion of which would overturn what your kindness had allowed me to obtain from you on that point. I have no objection to your politics, my dear Lord, as in the first place I do not much give my mind to politics; and, in the next, I cannot but have observed that you view politics, as well as some other subjects, through the optics of philosophy. But the note, or rather passage, I allude to, is so discouraging to the cause of our country, that it could not fail to damp the ardour of your readers. Let me intreat you not to recall the sacrifice of it; at least, let it not appear in this volume, in which I am more anxious than I can

express for your fame, both as a Poet and as a Philosopher. Except this, in which I thought myself warranted, I have not interfered with the subjects of the notes—yes, the word “fiction” I turned, as you have seen, conceiving it to have been no fiction to YOUNG. But when I did it, I determined not to send it to the press till it had met your eye. Indeed you know that even when a single word has struck me as better changed, my way has been to state my thought to you.”

The note I alluded to was as follows :—

NOTE ON SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

In the year 1809, it is a well-known fact, that the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen ; but Englishmen were daily butchered, and so far from the survivors obtaining redress, they were requested “not to interfere” if they perceived their compatriot defending himself against his amiable allies. I was once

stopped in the way to the theatre, at eight in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are, opposite to an *open shop*, and in a carriage with a friend, by three of our *allies*; and had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt we should have “adorned a tale,” instead of telling it. We have heard wonders of the Portuguese lately, and their gallantry,—pray heaven it continue; yet, “would it were bed-time, Hal, and all were well!” They must fight a great many hours, by “Shrewsbury clock,” before the number of their slain equals that of our countrymen butchered by these kind creatures, now metamorphosed into “Caçadores,” and what not. I merely state a fact not confined to Portugal, for in Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly, and not a Sicilian and Maltese is ever punished! The neglect of protection is disgraceful to our government and governors, for the murders are as notorious as the moon that shines upon them, and the apathy that overlooks them. The Portuguese, it is to be hoped, are complimented with the “Forlorn Hope,”—if the cowards

are become brave, (like the rest of their kind, in a corner,) pray let them display it. But there is a subscription for these “θεατὴ δειλον,” (they need not be ashamed of the epithet once applied to the Spartans,) and all the charitable patronymicks, from ostentatious A. to diffident Z., and 1*l.* 1*s.* 0*d.* from “an admirer of valour,” are in requisition for the lists at Lloyd’s, and the honour of British benevolence. Well, we have fought and subscribed, and bestowed peerages, and buried the killed by our friends and foes ; and, lo ! all this is to be done over again! Like “young The.” (in Goldsmith’s Citizen of the World,) as we “grow older, we grow never the better.” It would be pleasant to learn who will subscribe for us, in or about the year 1815, and what nation will send fifty thousand men, first to be decimated in the capital, and then decimated again (in the Irish fashion, *nine out of ten*,) in the “bed of honour,” which, as serjeant Kite says, is considerably larger and more commodious than the “bed of Ware.” Then they must have a poet to write the “Vision of Don Perceval,” and generously bestow the profits of the well and

widely-printed quarto to re-build the “ Back-wynd” and the “ Canon-gate,” or furnish new kilts for the half-roasted Highlanders. Lord Wellington, however, has enacted marvels ; and so did his oriental brother, whom I saw charioteering over the French flag, and heard clipping bad Spanish, after listening to the speech of a patriotic cobler of Cadiz, on the event of his own entry into that city, and the exit of some five thousand bold Britons out of this “ best of all possible worlds.” Sorely were we puzzled how to dispose of that same victory of Talavera ; and a victory it surely was somewhere, for every body claimed it. The Spanish dispatch and mob called it *Cuesta's*, and made no great mention of the Viscount ; the French called it *theirs* (to my great discomfiture, for a French consul stopped my mouth in Greece with a pestilent Paris Gazette, just as I had killed Sebastiani “ in buckram,” and king Joseph in “ Kendal green,”) —and we have not yet determined *what* to call it, or *whose*, for certes it was none of our own. Howbeit, Massena’s retreat is a great comfort, and as we have not been in the habit of pursuing for

some years past, no wonder we are a little awkward at first. No doubt we shall improve, or if not, we have only to take to our old way of retrograding, and there we are at home."

There were several stanzas in which allusions were made of a personal nature, and which I prevailed upon Lord Byron to omit. The reasons which induced their suppression continue still to have equal force, as at the time of the first publication of the poem.

As the poem went through the press, we had constant communication upon the subject, of the nature of which the following letter, taken from several which I wrote to him, may suggest an idea.

"I wish to direct your attention to several passages in the accompanying proofs, in which a minute critic might perhaps find something to carp at.

In stanza 24, the moon is called 'a

reflected sphere.' I do not know that this is admissible even to a poet. The sphere is *not reflected*, but reflects. The *participle present* would settle the sense, though I should prefer the adjective, *reflective*.

A similar objection appears to me, but I may be wrong, to 'the track oft trod.' To the idea of *treading*, feet and firm footing seem so necessary, that I doubt whether it is in the power of a trope to transfer it to *water*. It is in the 27th stanza.

In the next, the 28th, if Fenelon has not made me forget Homer, I think there is ground for a classical demurrer. Ulysses and Telemachus were individually well received by the immortal lady, but you will recollect, that *she* herself says to the latter 'No mortal approaches my shores with impunity.' You say, 'still a haven smiles.' Though no advocate for an unvarying sweetness of measure, my ear rebels against this line, in stanza 39 :—

‘ Born beneath some remote inglorious star.’

The stanza is remarkably beautiful, both for thought and versification, that line excepted, the idea of which is appropriate and good; but its want of melody checks the reader’s pleasure just as it is coming to its height. I wish you would make it a little smoother. You find I have given over teasing you about your *sad* stanzas, and, to be consistent in my reluctant submission, I shall say nothing of the similar errors in the accompanying proofs; but I am more than ever bent on dedicating a *volume of truth* to you, and shall set about it forthwith. The more I read the more I am delighted; but, observe, I do not agree with you in your opinion of the sex: the stanzas are very agreeable: the previous ones of the voyage from Cadiz through the Straits to Calypso’s Island are very fine: the 25th and 26th are exquisite. I will send for the proofs on Monday.”

CHAPTER VIII.

RETROSPECT—MAIDEN SPEECH.

As I was now near Lord Byron, for he was at this time seldom absent from town, our personal communications were frequent ; and, except a few queries addressed to him on the proofs, his work went smoothly on through the press during the months of January and February, without further solicitation on my part, till we came to the shorter Poems, when I urged him to omit the one entitled “Euthanasia,” which he was kind enough to consent to do ; but which, I must add, he had not resolution enough to persist in suppressing, and it was inserted in the succeeding editions.

Lord Byron had excited in my heart a warm affection ; I felt, too, some pride in the part I took in combating his errors, as well as in being instrumental to his reputation, and I anxiously wished to see a real change of mind effected in him. Though I could not flatter myself that I had made any successful invasion on his philosophical opinions, and was almost hopeless on the subject, I was still very desirous to keep as much as possible of his free-thinking in a latent state, being as solicitous that he should acquire the esteem and affection of men, as I was eager in my anticipation of the admiration and fame that awaited his genius. It was with this view I wished, and sometimes prevailed upon him, to suppress some passages in his compositions : and it was with this view that I often spoke to him of the superior and substantial fame, the way to which lay before him through the House of Lords, expressing my

hope of one day seeing him an active and eloquent statesman. He was alive to this ambition; and I looked accordingly for great enjoyment in the session of 1812, now approaching.

In spite of these prospects—in spite of genius—in spite of youth—Lord Byron often gave way to a depression of spirits, which was more the result of his peculiar position than of any gloomy tendency received from nature. The fact is, he was out of his sphere, and he felt it. By the death of his cousin William, who was killed at a siege in the Mediterranean, he unexpectedly became presumptive heir to his grand uncle, and not long after succeeded to the barony, at a very early period of his minority. His immediate predecessor had long given up society; and, after his fatal duel with Mr. Chaworth, had never appeared either at Court or in Parliament, but shut himself up in Newstead Abbey, the

monastic mansion of an estate bestowed upon one of his ancestors by Henry VIII. at the suppression of the religious houses ; or, if compelled to go to London on business, he travelled with the utmost privacy, taking the feigned name of Waters. From him, therefore, no connexion could spring. His brother, the Admiral, was a man very highly respected ; but he too, after distinguishing his courage and ability, had been unfortunate in his professional career, and equally avoided society. The elder son of the admiral was an officer of the guards ; who, after the death of his first wife, Lady Conyers, by whom he had only one daughter, married Miss Gordon, of Gight, a lady related to a noble family in Scotland, of whom Lord Byron was born, and whom his lordship took a pleasure in stating to be a descendant of King James II. of Scotland, through his daughter, the princess Jane Stuart, who married the Marquis

of Huntley. But neither did she bring connexion. At the death of her husband, she found her finances in an impoverished state, and she consequently by no means associated in a manner suitable to the situation of a son who was one day to take a seat among the Peers of Great Britain. Captain George Anson Byron, whom I have mentioned in the first chapter, the brother of her husband, had, a little before she became a widow, obtained the command of a frigate stationed in the East Indies, where, while engaged in a particular service, he received a blow which caused a lingering disorder and his death*.

* I cannot resist the impulse I feel to introduce here the memorial of him, which was published in most of the public papers and journals at the time of his death.

“ George Anson Byron was a Captain in the British navy, and second son of the late Admiral, the Honourable John Byron, by whom he was introduced very early into the service; in which, having had several opportunities of exerting personal bravery and professional skill, he

This was the greatest loss Lord Byron, however unconscious of it, ever sustained. His uncle George not only stood high in his

attained a great degree of glory. In the war with France, previous to its revolution, he commanded the *Proserpine*, of 28 guns, in which he engaged the *Sphinx*, a French frigate, assisted by an armed ship; and some time after the *Alcmene*, another French frigate, both of which severally struck to his superior conduct and gallantry. In the course of the war he was appointed to the command of the *Andromache*, of 32 guns. He was present at Lord Howe's relief of Gibraltar, and at Lord Rodney's victory over Count de Grasse, to the action of which he was considerably instrumental; for, as it was publicly stated at the time, being stationed to cruise off the Diamond Rock, near Martinico, he kept the strictest watch upon the enemy, by sailing into the very mouth of their harbour, and gave the Admiral such immediate notice of their motions, that the British squadron, then lying off St. Lucia, were enabled to intercept and bring them to battle. In consequence of that important victory, he was selected by Lord Rodney to carry home Lord Cranstoun, with the account of it. In the despatches, Byron's services were publicly and honourably noticed, and he had the gratification of being personally well received by his Majesty.

“Desirous of serving in the East Indies, and applying

profession, but was generally beloved, and personally well connected. Had he returned from India with health, he would

for a ship going to that quarter of the globe, he was appointed to the command of the *Phœnix*, of 36 guns, and sailed with a small squadron under the Hon. William Cornwallis, early in the year 1789. Ever active, he sought the first occasion of being serviceable in the war against Tippoo Saib, and at the very outset intercepted the Sultan's transports, loaded with military stores. After this he distinguished himself by landing some of his cannon, and leaving a party of his men to assist in reducing one of the enemy's fortresses on the coast of Malabar. Unfortunately he fell a victim to his alacrity in that war.

"When General Abercrombie was on his march towards Seringapatam, the ship which Byron commanded lay off the mouth of a river, on which his assistance was required to convey a part of the army, and it was necessary that he should have an interview with the General. At the time that the interview was to take place, it blew fresh, and there was a heavy sea on the bar of the river; but the service required expedition, and danger disappeared before his eagerness. A sea broke upon the boat, and overset it: in rising through the waves the gunwale struck him twice violently upon the breast, and when he was taken up, it was not supposed that he could survive the shock he had sustained. He was, however, for a time

have made amends for the failure resulting from the supineness or faults of other parts of the family; and his nephew would have grown up in society that would have given a different turn to his feelings. The Earl of Carlisle and his family would have acted

restored to life, but he was no more to be restored to his country. The faculty did what could be done to preserve him, and then ordered him to England, rather hoping than believing that he could escape so far with life.

“ In England he lived above twelve months ; during which he suffered the misery of witnessing the dissolution of a beautiful, amiable, and beloved wife, who died at Bath, on the 26th of February, 1793, at the age of twenty-nine years ; upon which he fled with his children to Dawlish, and there closed his eyes upon them, just three months and a fortnight after they had lost their mother.

“ In his public character he was brave, active, and skilful ; and by his death his Majesty lost an excellent and loyal officer. In his private character, he was devout without ostentation, fond of his family, constant in friendship, generous and humane. The memory of many who read this will bear testimony to the justice of the praise ; the memory of him who writes it will, as long as that memory lasts, frequently recall his virtues, and dwell with pleasure on his friendship.”

a different part. They received his sister kindly as a relation; and there could have been no reason why their arms should not have been open to him also, had he not been altogether unknown to them personally, or had not some suspicion of impropriety in the mode of his being brought up attached to him or his mother. Be this as it may, certain it is, his relations never thought of him nor cared for him; and he was left both at school and at college to the mercy of the stream into which circumstances had thrown him. Dissipation was the natural consequence; and imprudencies were followed by enmity which took pains to blacken his character. His Satire had in some degree repelled the attacks that had been made upon him, but he was still beheld with a surly awe by his detractors; and that poem, though many were extolled in it, brought him no friends. He felt himself ALONE. The town was now full;

but in its concourse he had no intimates whom he esteemed, or wished to see. The Parliament was assembled, where he was far from being dead to the ambition of taking a distinguished part; there he was, if it may be said, still more *alone*.

In addition to this his affairs were involved, and he was in the hands of a lawyer,—a man of business. To these combined circumstances, more than either to nature, or sensibility on the loss of a mistress, I imputed the depressed state of mind in which I sometimes found him. At those times he expressed great antipathy to the world, and the strongest misanthropic feelings, particularly against women. He did not even see his sister, to whom he afterwards became so attached. He inveighed more particularly against England and Englishmen; talked of selling Newstead, and of going to reside at Naxos, in the Grecian Archipelago, to adopt the

eastern costume and customs, and to pass his time in studying the Oriental languages and literature. He had put himself upon a diet, which other men would have called starving, and to which some would have attributed his depression. It consisted of thin plain biscuits, not more than two, and often one, with a cup of tea, taken about one o'clock at noon, which he assured me was generally all the nourishment he took in the four-and-twenty hours. But he declared, that, far from sinking his spirits, he felt himself lighter and livelier for it; and that it had given him a greater command over himself in every other respect. This great abstinence is hardly credible, nor can I imagine it a literal fact, though doubtless much less food is required to keep the body in perfect health than is usually taken. He had a habit of perpetually chewing mastic, which probably assisted his determination to persevere in this mea-

gre regimen ; but I have no doubt that his principal auxiliary was an utter abhorrence of corpulence, which he conceived to be equally unsightly and injurious to the intellect ; and it was his opinion that great eaters were generally passionate and stupid.

As the printing of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage drew towards a conclusion, his doubt of its success and of its consequences was renewed ; he was occasionally agitated at the thought, and more than once talked of suppressing it. But while this was passing in his mind, the poem had begun to work its way by report ; and the critical junto were prepared, probably through Mr. Gifford, for something extraordinary. I now met more visitors, new faces, and some fashionable men at his lodgings ; among others, Mr. Rogers, and even Lord Holland himself. Soon after the meeting of Parliament, a Bill was introduced into the House of Lords in consequence of Riots in Nottinghamshire,

for the prevention of those riots, in which the chief object of the rioters was the destruction of the manufacturing frames throughout the country, so as to compel a call for manual labour. Lord Byron's estate lying in that county, he felt it incumbent upon him to take a part in the debate upon the Bill, and he resolved to make it the occasion of his first speech in the House. But this Nottingham Frame-breaking Bill, as it was called, was also interesting to the Recorder of Nottingham, Lord Holland, who took the lead in opposing it. Lord Byron's interest in the county, and his intention respecting the Bill were made known to Mr. Rogers, who, I understood, communicated it to Lord Holland, and soon after made them acquainted. In his Satire, Mr. Rogers ranked, among the eulogized, next to Gifford; and Lord Holland, among the lashed, was just not on a par with Jeffrey. The introduction took place at

Lord Byron's lodgings, in St. James's-street—I happened to be there at the time, and I thought it a curious event. Lord Byron evidently had an awkward feeling on the occasion, from a conscious recollection, which did not seem to be participated by his visitors. Lord Holland's age, experience, and other acquired distinctions, certainly, in point of form, demanded that the visit should have been paid at his house. This I am confident Lord Byron at that time would not have done; though he was greatly pleased that the introduction took place, and afterwards waved all ceremony. It would be useless to seek a motive for Lord Holland's condescension, unless it could be shown that it was to overcome evil with good. Whether that was in his mind or not, the new acquaintance improving into friendship, or something like it, had a great influence in deciding the fate of a new edition of English Bards and Scotch Re-

viewers, which the publisher, Cawthorn, was now actively preparing, to accompany the publication of the Hints from Horace, that was still creeping on in the press.

Meanwhile, the Poem that was to be the foundation of Lord Byron's fame, and of the events of his future days, retarded nearly a month longer than was proposed, was now promised to the public for the end of February. The debate on the Nottingham Frame-Breaking Bill was appointed for the 27th of the same month. It was an extraordinary crisis in his life. He had before him, the characters of a Poet and of an Orator to fix and to maintain. For the former, he depended still upon his Satires, more than upon Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, which he contemplated with considerable dread; and, for the latter, he not only meditated, but wrote an oration, being afraid to trust his feelings in the assembly he was to address, with an extemporaneous

effusion at first. He occasionally spoke parts of it when we were alone; but his delivery changed my opinion of his power as to eloquence, and checked my hope of his success in Parliament. He altered the natural tone of his voice, which was sweet and round, into a formal drawl, and he prepared his features for a part—it was a youth declaiming a task. This was the more perceptible, as in common conversation, he was remarkably easy and natural; it was a fault contracted in the studied delivery of speeches from memory, which has been lately so much attended to in the education of boys. It may wear off, and yield to the force of real knowledge and activity, but it does not promise well; and they who fall into it are seldom prominent characters in stations where eloquence is required. By the delay of the printer, Lord Byron's maiden speech preceded the appearance of his poem. It produced a

considerable effect in the House of Lords, and he received many compliments from the Opposition Peers. When he left the great chamber, I went and met him in the passage ; he was glowing with success, and much agitated. I had an umbrella in my right hand, not expecting that he would put out his hand to me—in my haste to take it when offered, I had advanced my left hand —“ What,” said he, “ give your friend your left hand upon such an occasion ? ” I showed the cause, and immediately changing the umbrella to the other hand, I gave him my right hand, which he shook and pressed warmly. He was greatly elated, and repeated some of the compliments which had been paid him, and mentioned one or two of the Peers who had desired to be introduced to him. He concluded with saying, that he had, by his speech, given me the best advertisement for Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.

A short time afterwards, he made me a present of the original manuscript of his speech *which he had previously written,— and from that manuscript,* I now insert it here as a literary curiosity, not devoid of interest.

“ My LORDS,

“ The subject now submitted to your Lordships, for the first time, though new to the House, is, by no means, new to the country. I believe it had occupied the serious thoughts of all descriptions of persons long before its introduction to the notice of that Legislature whose interference alone could be of real service. As a person in some degree connected with the suffering county, though a stranger, not only to this House in general, but to almost every individual whose attention I presume to solicit, I must claim some portion of your Lordships’ indulgence, whilst I offer a few observations on a question in which I confess myself deeply interested. To enter into any detail of these riots would be su-

perfluous ; the House is already aware that every outrage short of actual bloodshed has been perpetrated, and that the proprietors of the frames obnoxious to the rioters, and all persons supposed to be connected with them, have been liable to insult and violence. During the short time I recently passed in Notts, not twelve hours elapsed without some fresh act of violence ; and, on the day I left the county, I was informed that forty frames had been broken the preceding evening as usual, without resistance and without detection. Such was then the state of that county, and such I have reason to believe it to be at this moment. But whilst these outrages must be admitted to exist to an alarming extent, it cannot be denied that they have arisen from circumstances of the most unparalleled distress. The perseverance of these miserable men in their proceedings, tends to prove that nothing but absolute want could have driven a large and once honest and industrious body of the people into the commission of excesses so hazardous to themselves, their families, and the community. At the time to which I allude, the town and county

were burdened with large detachments of the military ; the police was in motion, the magistrates assembled, yet all these movements, civil and military had led to—nothing. Not a single instance had occurred of the apprehension of any real delinquent actually taken in the fact, against whom there existed legal evidence sufficient for conviction. But the police, however useless, were by no means idle : several notorious delinquents had been detected ; men liable to conviction, on the clearest evidence, of the capital crime of poverty ; men, who had been nefariously guilty of lawfully begetting several children, whom, thanks to the times !—they were unable to maintain. Considerable injury has been done to the proprietors of the improved frames. These machines were to them an advantage, inasmuch as they superseded the necessity of employing a number of workmen, who were left in consequence to starve. By the adoption of one species of frame in particular, one man performed the work of many, and the superfluous labourers were thrown out of employment. Yet it is to be observed, that the work thus executed was in-

ferior in quality, not marketable at home, and merely hurried over with a view to exportation. It was called, in the cant of the trade, by the name of Spider-work. The rejected workmen, in the blindness of their ignorance, instead of rejoicing at these improvements in arts so beneficial to mankind, conceived themselves to be sacrificed to improvements in mechanism. In the foolishness of their hearts, they imagined that the maintenance and well doing of the industrious poor, were objects of greater consequence than the enrichment of a few individuals by any improvement in the implements of trade which threw the workmen out of employment, and rendered the labourer unworthy of his hire. And, it must be confessed, that although the adoption of the enlarged machinery, in that state of our commerce which the country once boasted, might have been beneficial to the master without being detrimental to the servant; yet, in the present situation of our manufactures, rotting in warehouses without a prospect of exportation, with the demand for work and workmen equally diminished, frames of this construction tend ma-

terially to aggravate the distresses and discontents of the disappointed sufferers. But the real cause of these distresses, and consequent disturbances, lies deeper. When we are told that these men are leagued together, not only for the destruction of their own comfort, but of their very means of subsistence, can we forget that it is the bitter policy, the destructive warfare, of the last eighteen years, which has destroyed their comfort, your comfort, all men's comfort ;—that policy which, originating with “great statesmen now no more,” has survived the dead to become a curse on the living unto the third and fourth generation! These men never destroyed their looms till they were become useless, worse than useless ; till they were become actual impediments to their exertions in obtaining their daily bread. Can you then wonder, that in times like these, when bankruptcy, convicted fraud, and imputed felony, are found in a station not far beneath that of your Lordships, the lowest, though once most useful portion of the people, should forget their duty in their distresses, and become only less guilty than one of their representatives ? But while the ex-

altered offender can find means to baffle the law, new capital punishments must be devised, new snares of death must be spread, for the wretched mechanic who is famished into guilt. These men were willing to dig, but the spade was in other hands ; they were not ashamed to beg, but there was none to relieve them. Their own means of subsistence were cut off ; all other employments pre-occupied ; and their excesses, however to be deplored and condemned, can hardly be the subject of surprise. It has been stated, that the persons in the temporary possession of frames connive at their destruction ; if this be proved upon inquiry, it were necessary that such material accessories to the crime should be principals in the punishment. But I did hope that any measure proposed by His Majesty's Government for your Lordships' decision, would have had conciliation for its basis ; or, if that were hopeless, that some previous inquiry, some deliberation, would have been deemed requisite ; not that we should have been called at once, without examination and without cause, to pass sentences by wholesale, and sign death-warrants

blindfold. But admitting that these men had no cause of complaint, that the grievances of them and their employers were alike groundless, that they deserved the worst; what inefficiency, what imbecility, has been evinced in the method chosen to reduce them! Why were the military called out to be made a mockery of—if they were to be called out at all? As far as the difference of seasons would permit, they have merely parodied the summer campaign of Major Sturgeon; and, indeed, the whole proceedings, civil and military, seem formed on the model of those of the Mayor and Corporation of Garrett. Such marchings and countermarchings! from Nottingham to Bulnall—from Bulnall to Bareford—from Bareford to Mansfield! and, when at length, the detachments arrived at their destination, in all ‘the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,’ they came just in time to witness the mischief which *had* been done, and ascertain the escape of the perpetrators;—to collect the *spolia opima*, in the fragments of broken frames, and return to their quarters amidst the derision of old women, and the hootings of children. Now, though in a

free country, it were to be wished that our military should never be too formidable, at least, to ourselves, I cannot see the policy of placing them in situations where they can only be made ridiculous. As the sword is the worst argument that can be used, so should it be the last : in this instance it has been the first, but, providentially as yet, only in the scabbard. The present measure will, indeed, pluck it from the sheath ; yet had proper meetings been held in the earlier stages of these riots,—had the grievances of these men and their masters (for they also have had their grievances) been fairly weighed and justly examined, I do think that means might have been devised to restore these workmen to their avocations, and tranquillity to the country. At present the county suffers from the double infliction of an idle military and a starving population.

In what state of apathy have we been plunged so long, that now, for the first time, the house has been officially apprised of these disturbances ? All this has been transacting within one hundred and thirty miles of London, and yet we, ‘ good easy men ! have deemed full sure our greatness

was a ripening,' and have sat down to enjoy our foreign triumphs in the midst of domestic calamity. But all the cities you have taken, all the armies which have retreated before your leaders, are but paltry subjects of self-congratulation, if your land divides against itself, and your dragoons and executioners must be let loose against your fellow-citizens. You call these men a mob, desperate, dangerous, and ignorant ; and seem to think that the only way to quiet the ' Bellua multorum capitum' is to lop off a few of its superfluous heads. But even a mob may be better reduced to reason by a mixture of conciliation and firmness, than by additional irritation and redoubled penalties. Are we aware of our obligations to a *mob* ! It is the mob that labour in your fields, and serve in your houses—that man your navy, and recruit your army—that have enabled you to defy all the world,—and can also defy you, when neglect and calamity have driven them to despair. You may call the people a mob, but do not forget that a mob too often speaks the sentiments of the people. And here I must remark with what alacrity you are accus-

tomed to fly to the succour of your distressed allies, leaving the distressed of your own country to the care of Providence or—the parish. When the Portuguese suffered under the retreat of the French, every arm was stretched out, every hand was opened,—from the rich man's largess to the widow's mite, all was bestowed to enable them to rebuild their villages and replenish their granaries. And at this moment, when thousands of misguided but most unfortunate fellow-countrymen are struggling with the extremes of hardship and hunger, as your charity began abroad, it should end at home. A much less sum—a tithe of the bounty bestowed on Portugal, even if these men (which I cannot admit without inquiry) could not have been restored to their employments, would have rendered unnecessary the tender mercies of the bayonet and the gibbet. But doubtless our funds have too many foreign claims to admit a prospect of domestic relief,—though never did such objects demand it. I have traversed the seat of war in the peninsula; I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey; but never, under the most des-

potic of infidel governments, did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return, in the very heart of a christian country. And what are your remedies ? After months of inaction, and months of action worse than inactivity, at length comes forth the grand specific, the never-failing nostrum of all state-physicians, from the days of Draco to the present time. After feeling the pulse and shaking the head over the patient, prescribing the usual course of warm water and bleeding—the warm water of your mawkish police, and the lancets of your military—these convulsions must terminate in death, the sure consummation of the prescriptions of all political Sangrados. Setting aside the palpable injustice and the certain inefficiency of the bill, are there not capital punishments sufficient on your statutes ? Is there not blood enough upon your penal code ! that more must be poured forth to ascend to heaven and testify against you ? How will you carry this bill into effect ? Can you commit a whole county to their own prisons ? Will you erect a gibbet in every field, and hang up men like scarecrows ? or will

you proceed (as you must to bring this measure into effect) by decimation ; place the country under martial law ; depopulate and lay waste all around you ; and restore Sherwood Forest as an acceptable gift to the crown in its former condition of a royal chase, and an asylum for outlaws ? Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace ? Will the famished wretch who has braved your bayonets be appalled by your gibbets ? When death is a relief, and the only relief it appears that you will afford him, will he be dragooned into tranquillity ? Will that which could not be effected by your grenadiers, be accomplished by your executioners ? If you proceed by the forms of law, where is your evidence ? Those who have refused to impeach their accomplices when transportation only was the punishment, will hardly be tempted to witness against them when death is the penalty. With all due deference to the noble lords opposite, I think a little investigation, some previous inquiry, would induce even them to change their purpose. That most favourite state measure, so marvelously efficacious in many and recent instances,

temporizing, would not be without its advantage in this. When a proposal is made to emancipate or relieve, you hesitate, you deliberate for years, you temporize and tamper with the minds of men; but a death-bill must be passed off hand, without a thought of the consequences. Sure I am, from what I have heard and from what I have seen, that to pass the bill under all the existing circumstances, without inquiry, without deliberation, would only be to add injustice to irritation, and barbarity to neglect. The framers of such a bill must be content to inherit the honours of that Athenian lawgiver whose edicts were said to be written, not in ink, but in blood. But suppose it past,—suppose one of these men, as I have seen them meagre with famine, sullen with despair, careless of a life which your lordships are perhaps about to value at something less than the price of a stocking-frame; suppose this man surrounded by those children for whom he is unable to procure bread at the hazard of his existence, about to be torn for ever from a family which he lately supported in peaceful industry, and which it is not his fault than he can

no longer so support; suppose this man—and there are ten thousand such from whom you may select your victims,—dragged into court to be tried for this new offence, by this new law,—still there are two things wanting to convict and condemn him, and these are, in my opinion, twelve butchers for a jury, and a Jefferies for a judge!"

CHAPTER IX.

IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF THE APPEARANCE OF CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

I **REALLY** believe that I was more anxious than its author about the reception of the poem, the progress of which I had been superintending with great pleasure for some months ; and by that anxiety I was led into a precipitate compliance with the solicitations of the printers of the last edition of the Satire, who were proprietors and editors of a literary journal, to favour them with an early review of the poem. I not only wrote it, but gave it to them, in the beginning of February ; telling them that the work would be out in the middle of that

month, but at the same time charging them to take care not to print it before the poem was published. The 1st of March arrived—the Poem did not appear—the Review did. I was vexed—it had the appearance of an eulogium prematurely hurried before the public by a friend, if not by the author himself. I was uneasy, lest it should strike Lord Byron in this light; and it was very likely that some good-natured friend or other would expedite his notice of the review. It fortunately happened that the 1st of the month fell on a Sunday, and that Lord Byron spent it at Harrow, if I recollect rightly, with his old tutor, Dr. Drury, and did not return to St. James's-street till Monday evening. On Tuesday I got a copy of the Pilgrimage, and hastened with it to him. Lord Valentia had been beforehand in carrying him the Review. “I shall be set down for the writer of it,” cried he. I told him the fact as it stood. The flatter-

ing excitement to which I had yielded, and the examination of the volume I then put into his hand, dispersed all unpleasant feeling on the occasion ; and I assured him that I would take an opportunity of making it publicly known that I had done it without his knowledge. But this was unnecessary ; for the publisher of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage had already spread it sufficiently, as I had informed him of it : and far from any harm resulting, it proved no bad advertisement of the publication, which was ready for every inquirer, as fast as the binder could put up the sheets into boards. The blunder passed unobserved, eclipsed by the dazzling brilliancy of the object which had caused it. The attention of the public was universally fixed upon the poem ; and in a very few days the whole impression was disposed of. It was not till he had this convincing proof, that Lord Byron had confidence of its success. On the day he re-

ceived the first copy in boards he talked of my making an agreement at once with the publisher, if he would offer a hundred or a hundred and fifty guineas for the copyright. I declared I would not; and in three days after, the publisher talked of being able perhaps to make an offer of three if not four hundred pounds; for he had not a doubt *now* of the sale, and that the edition would go off in less than three months. It went off in three days.

The rapidity of the sale of the poem, its reception, and the elation of the author's feelings, were unparalleled. But before I continue my account of it, I cannot refrain here from making some mention of Newstead Abbey, as it was at this juncture he again began to speak to me freely of his affairs. In spite of the pledge he had given ~~never~~ never to consent to the disposal of it, he occasionally spoke of the sale as necessary to clear him of embarrassments, and of

being urged to it by his agent. I never failed to oppose it; but he did not like to dwell upon it, and would get rid of the subject by coinciding with me. I thought his elation at the success of his poem a favourable juncture to take more liberty on so delicate a point; and to avoid the pain of talking, I wrote him the following letter :—

“ You cannot but see that the interest I take in all that concerns you comes from my heart, and I will not ask forgiveness for what I am conscious merits a kind reception. Though not acquainted with the precise state of your affairs, nor with those who have been employed in the management of them, I venture to say, in spite of your seeming to think otherwise, that there can be no occasion for the desperate remedies which have been suggested to you. It is an ungracious thing to suspect; but from my ignorance of the individuals by

whom your business is conducted, my suspicion can only attach generally to that corrupt state of nature in which self-interest is too apt to absorb all other considerations. Every motion of an agent, every word spoken or written by a lawyer, are so many conductors of the fortunes of their employers into their coffers ; consequently every advice from such persons is open to suspicion, and ought to be thoroughly examined before it is adopted. But who is to examine it ? I would say *yourself*, did I not think your pursuits, your mind, your very attainments, have by no means qualified you for the task. But there are men, and lawyers too, to be found of disinterested minds, and pure hands, to whom it would not be difficult to save you the mortification of parting with a property so honourable in the annals of your house. For God's sake mistrust him who suggested it ; and, if you are inclined to listen to it, mis-

trust yourself—pause and take counsel before you act.

Your affairs should be thoroughly submitted to such a man or men as I have mentioned—that is, all the accounts of your minority, and all the transactions relative to your property, with every voucher, should be produced to them, and examined by them. Through them every thing equitable and honourable would be done, and a portion of your income appropriated to the disencumbering of your estates. I am persuaded that you may be extricated from your difficulties without the harsh alternative proposed. You mentioned the subject of your affairs to me on your arrival in England, but you appeared afterwards to wish it dropped ; I have, however, frequently wished what, in consequence of your recent communication, I have now again expressed. Think of it, I beseech you."

I felt much anxiety at the thought of Newstead Abbey going out of the family—certainly not merely because my nephew was his heir presumptive, though a very natural motive; but I am chevaleresque enough to think the alienation of an estate so acquired, and so long possessed, a species of sacrilege. The following is part of a letter which I wrote home the next day (March 12th, 1812,) after I had seen him. Being written at the time, it is the best continuation of my narrative:—

“ The intelligence which Charles brought you of the unparalleled sale of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage must have given you great pleasure, though I think it will be more than counterbalanced by the pain of the subject on which I wrote yesterday to Lord Byron. I still hope it will be avoided; nor, till he talked of it, did I in fact credit that he had the power of disposing of that

estate. I was apprehensive that I had gone too far in interfering in his private affairs ; but, quite the contrary, he took my letter in very kind part, though, after a few observations he dropped the subject. On parting with Charles, we drove to St. James's-street, where I staid with him till near six o'clock, and had a good deal of pleasant conversation. I found the enclosed on his table directed to me. On opening it, I was surprised at what he wrote to me in it ; and still more on finding the contents to be a copy of verses to him, with a letter beginning—‘ Dear Childe Harold,’ expressing the greatest admiration, and advising him to be happy. Neither the letter nor the verses are badly written ; and the lady concludes with assuring him, that though she should be glad to be acquainted with him, she can feel no other emotion for him than admiration and regard, as her heart is already engaged to another. I looked at him seriously, and said, that none of *my*

family would ever write an anonymous letter. I said, that you had all given your opinion *openly*, and I had shown him that opinion. ‘ You are right, you are right,’ he said. ‘ I am sure it is not any of your family, but I really know nobody who I think cares half so much about me as you do ; and from many parts of the letter, it is no wonder I should suspect that it came from Mrs. Dallas, who I know is a good friend of mine.’ He is persuaded, he says, that it is written by somebody acquainted with us. I cannot think so. She says she should like to know if he has received her letter ; and requests him to leave a note at Hookham’s for Mr. Sidney Allison. He says he will not answer it.”

I have found another of my letters immediately following this, from which I shall make such extracts as relate to Lord Byron or the Poem. “ I called on Mr. Murray this morning, who told me that *the whole*

edition was gone off. He begged me to arrange with Lord Byron for putting the Poem to press again, which is to be done in the handsomest manner, in octavo. He shewed me letters from several of the most celebrated critics ; and told me that Mr. Gifford spoke with the highest admiration of the second Canto, which he had not seen before ; the first he had seen in manuscript. From him I went to St. James's-street, where I found Lord Byron loaded with letters from critics, poets, authors, and various pretenders to fame of different walks, all lavish of their raptures. In putting them into my hands he said—‘ I ought not to show such fine compliments, but I keep nothing from you.’ Among his raptured admirers I was not a little surprised to find an elegant copy of verses to him from Mr. Fitzgerald, the very first person celebrated in his Satire, of which he reminds him in a short prefatory note, adding, in a pleasing

and amiable manner, that it was impossible to harbour any resentment against the poet of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. It is impossible to tell you half the applause, either as to quantity or quality, bestowed upon him directly and indirectly. The letter from Lord Holland places him on a par with Walter Scott. But to come to myself :—After speaking of the sale, and settling the new edition, I said, ‘ How can I possibly think of this rapid sale, and the profits likely to ensue, without recollecting’—‘ What ? ’ ‘ Think what a sum your work may produce.’ ‘ I shall be rejoiced, and wish it doubled and trebled ; but do not talk to me of money. I never will receive money for my writings.’ ‘ I ought not to differ in an opinion which puts hundreds into my purse, but others—’ He put out his hand to me, shook mine, said he was very glad, and turned the conversation. The sentiment is noble, but pushed too far.

It is not only in this, but in other points, I have remarked a superior spirit in this young man; and which but for its native vigour would have been cast away. I am happy to say that I think his successes, and the notice that has been taken of him, have already had upon his mind the cheering effect I hoped and foresaw; and I trust all the gloom of his youth will be dissipated for the rest of his life. He was very cheerful to-day. What a pleasing reflection is it to me that when, on his arrival in England, he put this Poem into my hand, I saw its merits, and urged him to publish it. There are two copies binding elegantly and alike; this I mentioned to him, and said, one was for him, ‘and the other,’ said he ‘for Mrs. Dallas: let me have the pleasure of writing her name in it.’”

When I afterwards brought him the copies, he did write the name; and I had the happiness of finding him ready to send

one also to his sister. I handed him another copy to write her name in it; and I was truly delighted to read the following effusion, which I copied before I sent the volume off.

“ To Augusta, my dearest sister, and my best friend, who has ever loved me much better than I deserved, this volume is presented by her *father's* son, and most affectionate brother.

“ B.”

“ March 14th, 1812.”

He was now the universal talk of the town: his speech and his Poem had not only raised his fame to an extraordinary height, but had disposed all minds to bestow upon him the most favourable reception; to disbelieve his own black account of himself, and to forget that he had been a most bitter Satirist. Crowds of eminent persons courted an introduction, and some

volunteered their cards. This was the trying moment of virtue ; and no wonder it was shaken, for never was there such a sudden transition from neglect to courtship. Glory darted thick upon him from all sides ; from the Prince Regent and his admirable daughter, to the bookseller and his shopman ; from Walter Scott to ***** ; from Jeffrey to the nameless critics of the *Satirist*, *Scourge*, &c. He was the wonder of grey-beards, and the show of fashionable parties. At one of these, he happened to go early when there were very few persons assembled ; the Regent went in soon after ; Lord Byron was at some distance from him in the room. On being informed who he was, his Royal Highness sent a gentleman to him to desire that he would be presented. The presentation of course took place ; the Regent expressed his admiration of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and continued a conversation, which so fascinated the Poet,

that had it not been for an accidental deferring of the next levee, he bade fair to become a visitor at Carlton House, if not a complete courtier.

I called on him on the morning for which the levee had been appointed, and found him in a full-dress court suit of clothes, with his fine black hair in powder, which by no means suited his countenance. I was surprised, as he had not told me that he should go to Court ; and it seemed to me as if he thought it necessary to apologize for his intention, by his observing, that he could not in decency but do it, as the Regent had done him the honour to say that he hoped to see him soon at Carlton House. In spite of his assumed philosophical contempt of royalty, and of his decided junction with the opposition, he had not been able to withstand the powerful operation of royal praise ; which, however, continued to influence him only till flattery of a more con-

genial kind diverted him from the enjoyment of that which for a moment he was disposed to receive. The levee had been suddenly put off, and he was dressed before he was informed of the alteration which had taken place.

It was the first and the last time he was ever so dressed, at least for a British Court. A newly-made friend of his

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Lord Byron was more than half prepared to yield to this influence ; and the harsh verses that proceeded from his pen, were, I believe, composed more to humour his new friend's passions than his own. Certain it is, he gave up all ideas of appearing at Court, and fell into the habit of speaking disrespectfully of the Prince.

But his poem flew to every part of the kingdom, indeed of the world ; his fame

hourly increased ; and he all at once found himself “ translated to the spheres,” and complimented by all, with an elevated character, possessing youthful brilliancy, alas ! without the stamen necessary to support it.

A gratifying compliment was paid him on the appearance of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, by the order given by the Princess Charlotte for its being magnificently bound. It was displayed for some days in Ebers’s shop, in Bond-street. Lord Byron was highly pleased when I described it to him.

Among the testimonies of the high feeling which the blaze of his genius produced, I admired and selected a letter to him from the late Dr. Clarke, which I have an additional pleasure in inserting here, as it does not appear in the Doctor’s correspondence lately given to the public :—

“ DEAR LORD BYRON,

“ From the eagerness which I felt to make known my opinion of your Poem, before others had expressed *any* upon the subject, I waited upon you to deliver my hasty, although hearty, commendation. If it be worthy your acceptance, take it once more, in a more deliberate form ! Upon my arrival in town I found that Mathias entirely coincided with me. Surely, said I to him, Lord Byron, at this time of life, cannot have experienced such keen anguish, as those exquisite allusions to what older men *may* have felt seem to denote. This was his answer, ‘ *I fear he has—he could not else have written such a Poem.*’ This morning I read the second Canto with all the attention it so highly merits, in the peace and stillness of my study ; and I am ready to confess I was never so much affected by any poem, passionately fond of poetry as I have been from earliest youth. When, after the 9th stanza you introduce the first line of the 10th,

Here let me sit upon the mossy stone ;

the thought and the expression are so truly Petrarch's, that I would ask you whether you ever read

Poi quando 'l vero sgombra
Quel dolce error pur lì medesmo assido
Me freddo, pietra morta in pietra viva ;
In guisa d' uom che pensi e piange e scriva.

Thus rendered by Mr. Wilmot, the only person capable of making Petrarch speak English :—

But when rude truth destroys
The loved illusion of the dreamed sweets,
I sit me down on the cold rugged stone,
Less cold, less dead than I, and think and weep alone.

“ The eighth stanza, ‘ *Yet if as holiest men*,’ &c. has never been surpassed. In the 23d, the sentiment is at variance with Dryden,

Strange cozenage ! *none* would live past years again :

and it is perhaps an instance wherein for the first time I found not within my own breast an echo to your thought, for I would not ‘ *be once more a boy*;’ but the generality of men will agree with you, and wish to tread life’s path again.

" In the 12th stanza of the same Canto, you might really add a very curious note to these lines—

Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains ;

by stating this fact :—When the last of the metopes was taken from the Parthenon, and, in moving it, great part of the superstructure with one the triglyphs was thrown down by the workmen whom Lord Elgin employed, the Dissdar, who beheld the mischief done to the building, took his pipe out of his mouth, dropped a tear, and, in a supplicating tone of voice, said to Lusieri—Τέλος ! I was present at the time.

" Once more I thank you for the gratification you have afforded me.

" Believe me,

" Ever yours most truly,

" E. D. CLARKE."

" *Trumpington,*
" *Wednesday Morning.*"

CHAPTER X.

SUPPRESSION OF THE SATIRE AND HINTS FROM
HORACE.—FIRST SALE OF NEWSTEAD—
PROPOSED NOVEL.

THOUGH flattery had now deeply inoculated him with its poison, he was at first unwilling to own its effects even to himself; and to me he declared that he did not relish society, and was resolved never to mix with it. He made no resistance however to its invitations, and in a very short time he not only willingly obeyed the summons of fashion, but became a votary. One evening, seeing his carriage at the door in St. James's Street, I knocked, and found him at home. He was engaged to a party, but it was not time to go, and I sat nearly an

hour with him. He had been reading Childe Harold, and continued to read some passages of it aloud,—he enjoyed it, and I enjoyed it doubly. On putting it down, he talked of the parties he had been at, and of those to which he was invited, and confessed an alteration in his mind; “I own,” said he, “I begin to like them.”

Holland House, on which so much of the point of his satire had been directed, being now one of his most flattering resorts, it was no longer difficult to persuade him to suppress his satirical writings. The fifth edition of “ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS” was now ready to issue from the press; the “HINTS FROM HORACE” was far advanced; and the “CURSE OF MINERVA” was in preparation. He had not listened to me fully; but he had begun not only to be easy at the delay of the printing of these poems, but to desire that delay, as if he had it already in contemplation to

be guided by the reception of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Yet even after this was clear, he did not immediately decide upon the suppression of them; till some of his new friends requested it. Upon this, the bookseller who was to publish them, Cawthorn, was apprised of the author's intention, and was desired to commit the whole of the new edition of "ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS," to the flames; and the carrying this into execution was entrusted entirely to him.

The expenses of the edition being defrayed, as well as those attending the other poems that were also stopped in the press, and the bookseller having reaped all the profits of the four preceding editions, he had literally no right to complain on this subject; but as far as respects the right attached to expectations raised, he had, perhaps, cause to think himself ill used. He had undertaken to publish what had been

refused by other publishers; had risked making enemies, and had not neglected the publication entrusted to him. He ought to have had the advantages attending the circulation of the author's other works. I wished it, and proposed it. Lord Byron had been directed to Miller as the publisher in fashion; and from motives I have already stated, Cawthorn was deprived of a patronage, which he reasonably expected. He naturally felt sore, but endeavoured to submit with a good grace. The suppression of the satire was gratifying to Lord Byron's new friends; but it had the effect of raising the value of the copies that could be obtained. An Irish edition was circulated unadvertized, but it did not appear to renew animosity. He was completely forgiven as the venomous satirist, and embraced as the successful poet of the Pilgrimage. I must not omit to say that he had some occasional doubts, or rather mo-

ments of assumed modesty, as to the merit of his new poem, in spite of its success. "I may place a great deal of it," said he, "to being a lord." And again,—"I have made them afraid of me." There may be something in both these remarks, as they regard the celerity of his fame, and the readiness of the "all hail," that was given to him; but the impression made by Childe Harold on reiterated perusals, and the nerve of his succeeding works, leave not a moment's doubt of his success being indeed the just meed of his genius.

I was now to see Lord Byron in a new point of view. The town was full of company, as usual in the spring. Besides the speech he had made on the Frame-breaking Bill, he again attracted notice on the Catholic Question, which was agitated warmly by the peers in the beginning of April. His name was in every mouth, and his poem in every hand. He converted criti-

cism to adulation, and admiration to love. His stanzas abounded with passages which impressed on the heart of his readers pity for the miserable feelings of a youth who could express so admirably what he felt ; and this pity, uniting with the delight proceeding from his poetry, generated a general affection of which he knew not the value ; for while the real fruits of happiness clustered around him, he neglected them, and became absorbed in gratifications that could only tend to injure the reputation he had gained. He professedly despised the society of women, yet female adulation became the most captivating charm to his heart. He had not admitted the ladies of his own family to any degree of intimacy ; his aunts, his cousins, were kept at a distance, and even his sister had hitherto shared the like fate. Among the admirers who had paid their tribute in prose or verse to the muse of the Pilgrimage, I

have already mentioned one who asked for an acknowledgment of the receipt of her letter. He had treated that letter lightly, and said he would not answer it. He was not able to keep his resolution; and on finding his correspondent to be a fine young woman, and distinguished for eccentric notions, he became so enraptured, so intoxicated, that his time and thoughts were almost entirely devoted to reading her letters and answering them. One morning he was so absorbed in the composition of a letter to her, that he barely noticed me as I entered the room. I said, "Pray go on;" and sat down at one side of the table at which he was writing, where I looked over a newspaper for some time. Finding that he did not conclude, I looked at him, and was astonished at the complete abstraction of his mind, and at the emanation of his sentiments on his countenance. He had a peculiar smile on his lips; his eyes beamed

the pleasure he felt from what was passing from his imagination to his paper ; he looked at me and then at his writing, but I am persuaded he did not see me, and that the thoughts with which he teemed prevented his discerning any thing about him. I said, "I see you are deeply engaged." His ear was as little open to sound as his eye to vision. I got up ; on which he said, "Pray sit." I answered that I would return. This roused him a little, and he said, "I wish you would." I do not think he knew what passed, or observed my quitting him. This scene gave me great pain. I began to fear that his fame would be dearly bought. Previous to the appearance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, his mind had gained some important conquests over his senses ; and I also thought he had barred his heart against the grosser attacks of the passion of vanity. If these avenues of destruction to the soul were again to be thrown open

by the publication of the poem, it were better that it had never been published. I called upon him the next day, when I found him in his usual good-humour. He told me to whom he had been writing, and said he hoped I never thought him rude. I took my usual liberty with him, and honestly warned him against his new dangers. While I was with him the lady's page brought him a new letter. He was a fair-faced delicate boy of thirteen or fourteen years old, whom one might have taken for the lady herself. He was dressed in a scarlet huzzar jacket and pantaloons, trimmed in front in much the same manner with silver buttons, and twisted silver lace, with which the narrow slit cuffs of his jacket were also embroidered. He had light hair curling about his face ; and held a feathered fancy hat in his hand, which completed the scenic appearance of this urchin Pandarus. I could not but suspect

at the time that it was a disguise. If so, he never disclosed it to me, and as he had hitherto had no reserve with me, the thought vanished with the object of it, and I do not precisely recollect the mode of his exit. I wished it otherwise, but wishing was in vain.

Lord Byron passed the spring and summer of 1812 intoxicated with success, attentions of every kind, and fame. In the month of April he again promised me the letters to his mother as a pledge that he would not part with Newstead; but early in the autumn he told me that he was urged by his man of business, and that Newstead must be sold. This lawyer appears to have had an undue sway over him. Newstead was brought to the hammer at Garraway's. I attended the auction. Newstead was not sold, only 90,000*l.* being offered for it. What I remember that day affected me considerably. The auctioneer was ques-

tioned respecting the title; he answered, that the title was a grant from Henry VIII. to an ancestor of Lord Byron's, and that the estate had ever since regularly descended in the family. I rejoiced to think it had escaped that day; but my pleasure did not last long. From Garraway's I went to St. James's Street, when he told me that he had made a private agreement for it with Mr. Claughton, for the sum of 140,000*l.* I saw the agreement—but some time after it turned out that the purchaser could not complete the purchase, and forfeited, I think, 20,000*l.*, the estate remaining Lord Byron's. It has been since sold, I know not for what sum, as I was abroad at the time; and my correspondence with Lord Byron had ceased. It is a legal maxim that, “the law abhors a perpetuity.” I have nothing to say against opening the landed property of the kingdom to purchasers who may be more worthy of it.

than the sellers, but there are two considerations which cannot but affect the mind of a thinking man. It disgraces ancestry, and it robs posterity. A property bestowed, like Newstead, for deeds of valour and loyalty, is a sacred gift ; and the inheritor that turns it into money commits a kind of sacrilege. He may have a legal, but he has no moral, no honourable right to divert the transmission of it from the blood that gained it. I cannot but think that the reviewer in the Edinburgh Review, who speaks of Newstead, has over-shot his aim in ornamenting the abbey with the bright reflections of its possessor's genius ; in a poet, imagination requires the alliance of soul ; without both, no man can be a whole poet. Lord Byron should have ate his daily biscuit with his cup of tea to preserve Newstead. The reviewer's remarks arose from a perusal of the account

given of it by Walpole. I will here insert the account and the critique:

“ As I returned,” says Walpole, “ I saw Newstead and Althorpe; I like both. The former is the very Abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on: it has a private chapel quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned. The present lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks; five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense, he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy; and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like plough-boys dressed in old family liveries

for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals ; the refectory, now the great drawing-room, is full of Byrons ; the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor."

On this the reviewer remarks :—

" This is a careless, but happy description, of one of the noblest mansions in England ; and it will *now* be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the SEAT of the BYRONS, old, majestic and venerable ; but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which Fame sheds over the habitations of genius, and which now mantles every turret of Newstead Abbey. He saw it when Decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel ; and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to

go forth from those antique cloisters that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, ‘Sleep no more’ to all the house. Whatever may be its future fate, Newstead Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the court-yard and the chambers. It may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride or plebeian opulence—but it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish, and will go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals*.”

This is rather a poetical effusion than a sober criticism. I have heard that the purchaser means to remove the Abbey as rubbish, and to build a modern villa upon its site. It may be as well for the Poet’s fame;

* Edinburgh Review for December, 1818—No. 61, pages 90, 91.

for though his genius might mantle every stone from the foundations to the pinnacles, it would not cover the sale of it *.

About this time Lord Byron began, I cannot say to be cool,—for cool to me he never was,—but I thought to neglect me; and I began to doubt whether I had most reason to be proud of, or to be mortified by, my connexion and correspondence with him.

The pain arising from the mortification in this change was little, compared to that which I felt in the disappointment of my hope, that his success would elevate his character, as well as raise his fame. I saw that he was gone ; and it made me unhappy. With an imagination, learning, and language to exalt him to the highest character of a poet, his mind seemed not sufficiently strong to raise him equally high in the not adventitious character of a great man.

* We are glad to learn that the present proprietor of Newstead has expended a large sum upon its repair, with a good taste worthy its high associations.

In the autumn he took a place in the country, near Lord * * *'s, where he again became absorbed for a few months, and where he wrote his first dedication (a poetical one) of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

In the beginning of the year 1813 he seemed to be a little recovered from his intoxication. He lived in a house in Ben-net-street, St. James's, where I saw him almost every day, by his own desire, and his kindness and attentions seemed uninterrupted. I confess I suspected that the independence of my opinions had had some effect upon his mind. I have the copy of a letter by me, written to him in the Autumn of 1812, (August 19th,) when he was going to the country-house he had taken, as I have just mentioned; and which I will insert here as another proof of that independence :—

“ You talked of going out of town in a few days; pray remember to leave St. Simon’s works for me. I will call again, but you may be gone—if so, I shall be glad to hear from you. Wherever you are I most sincerely wish you happy; but let me, with my old sincerity, add, that I am confident you are not at present in the road of happiness. Do not hate me for this, for be assured that no man, nor *woman* either, more sincerely wishes you the enjoyment of every good, than does

Your truly obliged, &c.”

He again became satiated with praise and pleasure, and turned his mind to composition. I was highly gratified, allowing it even to be flattery, at his acknowledgement of being pleased with the novels I had written; and I was still more flattered when he proposed to me to write one jointly. I thought the proposal made on a

transient thought; and was rather surprised, when I next saw him, to receive from him two folio sheets of paper, accompanied with these words, "Now, do you go on." On opening the paper I read, "Letter I. Darrell to G. Y." and found it to be the commencement of a novel. I was charmed to find his intention real; but my pleasure, which continued through the perusal, forsook me when I reflected on the impossibility of my adopting either the style or the objects he had in view, as he dwelled upon them. I told him I saw that he meant to laugh at me, but I kept the manuscript, though, at the time, I had no intention of using it; however, in writing another novel, I was tempted to build a very different structure upon it than was originally planned, and it stands the first letter in my novel of Sir Francis Darrell.

LETTERS.

“ — J — , 180—.

“ — DARRELL TO G. Y.

[*The first part of this letter is lost.*]]

“ * * * * * So much for your present pursuits. I will now resume the subject of my last. How I wish you were upon the spot ; your taste for the ridiculous would be fully gratified ; and if you felt inclined for more serious amusement, there is no ‘lack of argument.’ Within this last week our guests have been doubled in number, some of them my old acquaintance. Our host you already know—absurd as ever, but rather duller, and I should conceive troublesome to such of his very good friends as find his house more agreeable than its owner. I confine myself to observation, and do not find him at all in the way, though Veramore and Asply are of a different opinion. The former, in particular, imparts to me many pathetic complaints on the want of opportunities (nothing else being wanting to the success of the said Veramore,) created by the

fractious and but ill-concealed jealousy of poor Bramblebear, whose Penelope seems to have as many suitors as her namesake, and for aught I can see to the contrary, with as much prospect of carrying their point. In the mean time, I look on and laugh, or rather, I should laugh were you present to share in it: Sackcloth and sorrow are excellent wear for Soliloquy; but for a laugh there should be two, but not many more, except at the first night of a modern tragedy.

" You are very much mistaken in the design you impute to myself; I have *none* here or elsewhere. I am sick of old intrigues, and too indolent to engage in new ones. Besides, I am, that is, I used to be, apt to find my heart gone at the very time when you fastidious gentlemen begin to recover yours. I agree with you that the world, as well as yourself, are of a different opinion. I shall never be at the trouble to undeceive either; my follies have seldom been of my own seeking. 'Rebellion came in my way and I found it.' This may appear as coxcombical a speech as Veramore could make, yet *you* partly know its truth. You talk to me too of 'my cha-

racter,' and yet it is one which you and fifty others have been struggling these seven years to obtain for yourselves. I wish you had it, you would make so much *better*, that is *worse*, use of it ; relieve me, and gratify an ambition which is unworthy of a man of sense. It has always appeared to me extraordinary that you should value women so highly and yet love them so little. The height of your gratification ceases with its accomplishment ; you bow—and you sigh—and you worship—and abandon. For my part I regard them as a very beautiful but inferior animal. I think them as much out of their place at our tables as they would be in our senates. The whole present system, with regard to that sex, is a remnant of the chivalrous barbarism of our ancestors ; I look upon them as grown up children, but, like a foolish mamma, am always the slave of some *only* one. With a contempt for the race, I am ever attached to the individual, in spite of *myself*. You know, that though not rude, I am inattentive ; any thing but a ' beau garçon.' I would not hand a woman out of her carriage, but I would leap into a river after her. However, I grant you

that, as they must walk oftener out of chariots than into the Thames, you gentlemen Servitors, Cortejos, and Cicisbei, have a better chance of being agreeable and useful; *you* might, very probably, do both; but, as you can't swim, and I can, I recommend you to invite me to your first water-party.

“ Bramblebear’s Lady Penelope puzzles me. She is very beautiful, but not one of my beauties. You know I admire a different complexion, but the figure is perfect. She is accomplished, if her mother and music-master may be believed; amiable, if a soft voice and a sweet smile could make her so; young, even by the register of her baptism; pious and chaste, and doting on her husband, according to Bramblebear’s observation; equally loving, *not* of her husband, though rather less pious, and *t’other* thing, according to Veramore’s; and, if mine hath any discernment, she detests the one, despises the other, and loves—herself. That she dislikes Bramblebear is evident; poor soul, I can’t blame her; she has found him out to be mighty weak, and *little-tempered*; she has also discovered that she married

too early to know what she liked, and that there are many likeable people who would have been less discordant and more creditable partners. Still she conducts herself well, and in point of good-humour, to admiration.—A good deal of religion, (*not* enthusiasm, for that leads the contrary way), a prying husband who never leaves her, and, as I think, a very temperate pulse, will keep her out of scrapes. I am glad of it, first, because, though Bramblebear is bad, I don't think Vera—more much better ; and next, because Bramblebear is ridiculous enough already, and it would only be *thrown* away upon him to make him more so ; thirdly, it would be a pity, because no body *would pity* him ; and, fourthly, (as Scrub says) he would then become a melancholy and sentimental harlequin, instead of a merry, fretful, pantaloon, and I like the pantomime better as it is now cast.

“ More in my next.

“ Yours, truly,

“ —— DARRELL.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE CORSAIR—CHARGE AGAINST LORD BYRON IN THE PUBLIC PAPERS.

I AGAIN enjoyed his friendship and his company, with a pleasure sweet to my memory, and not easily expressed. He was in the habit of reading his poems to me as he wrote them. In the spring of the year 1813, he read me the *Giaour*—he assured me that the verse containing the simile of the Scorpion was imagined in his sleep, except the last four lines. At this time, I thought him a good deal depressed in spirits, and I lamented that he had abandoned every idea of being a statesman. He talked of going abroad again, and requested me to

keep in mind, that he had a presentiment that he should never return. He now renewed a promise which he had made me, of concluding Childe Harold and giving it to me, and requested me to print all his works after his death. I considered all this as the effects of depression—his genius had but begun the long and lofty flight it was about to take, and he was soon awakened to the charm of occasional augmentations of fame. It was some time before he determined on publishing the Giaour. I believe not till Mr. Gifford sent him a message, calling on him not to give up his time to slight compositions, as he had genius to send him to the latest posterity with Milton and Spenser. Meanwhile, he had written the Bride of Abydos. Towards the end of the year, his publisher wrote him a letter, offering a thousand guineas for these two poems, which he did not accept, but suffered him to publish them. He was so

pleased with the flattery he received from that quarter, that he forgot his dignity ; and once he even said to me, that money levelled distinction.

The American government had this year sent a special embassy to the Court of Petersburgh. Mr. Gallatin was the Ambassador, and my nephew, George Mifflin Dallas, was his Secretary. When the business in Russia was finished, they came to England. My nephew had brought over with him an American Poem. American literature rated very low. The Edinburgh Review says, “ the Americans have none—no native literature we mean. It is all imported. They had a Franklin indeed; and may afford to live half a century on his fame. There is, or was, a Mr. Dwight, who wrote some poems; and his baptismal name was Timothy. There is also a small account of Virginia, by Jefferson, and an Epic, by Joel Barlow—and some pieces of

pleasantry, by Mr. Irving. But why should the Americans write books, when a six weeks passage brings them, in their own tongue, our sense, science, and genius, in bales and hogsheads?*” Much cannot be said for the liberality of this criticism. Some names, it is true, have been doomed by the spirit of ridicule to mockery ; Lord Byron himself exclaims against both baptismal and surname—

Oh ! Amos Cottle !—Phœbus ! what a name
To fill the speaking-trump of future fame !

So when it suited his Satire, he split the southern smooth monosyllable of Brougham into the rough northern dissyllable of Brough-am :

Beware, lest blundering Brough-am spoil the sale,
Turn beef to bannocks, cauliflowers to kail—

Yet we know, that very unsonorous names have, by greatness of mind, by talents and

* Edinburgh Review—No. 60, p. 144, Dec. 1818.

by virtues, been exalted to the highest pitch of admiration. Pitt, and Fox, and Petty, owe their grandeur to the men who have borne them. Tom Spratt, and Tom Tickell, were English poets and celebrated characters. President Dwight was no writer of poetry, but had he written the *Seasons*, he would have been a far-famed poet in spite of his name being Timothy; and the theological works which he has written, and of which the Edinburgh Reviewer seems to be totally ignorant, will immortalize his name though it were ever so cacaphonic. The reasoning is equally unintelligible, when the Reviewer decides it to be sufficient for the Americans to import sense, science, and genius, in bales and hogsheads. Might not the Americans as reasonably ask why the lawyers of Edinburgh should write Reviews, when three days bring them, in the tongue they write in, all the criticism of England, in brown-paper packages? Poetical genius is

a heavenly spark, with which it pleases the Almighty to gift some men. It has shone forth in the other quarters of the globe—if it be bestowed on an American, the ability of importing English and Scotch poems is no good reason why it should be smothered. The poem which my nephew brought to England was one of those pieces of pleasantry by an American gentleman*. It was a burlesque of a fine poem of one of our most celebrated poets, and as a specimen of a promising nature, it was reprinted in London. With this motive, only the ingenuity of the writer was considered. It could not be thought more injurious to the real Bard, than Cotton's burlesque to Virgil; nor could the American hostility to a gallant British

* The gentleman to whom it was attributed has since distinguished himself in the literary world, and is now said not to be the author of it. It was not denied at the time: the Americans in London ascribed it to him.

commander be suspected of giving a moment's pain—at least I did not think so.

I believe that the nature of this American poem was known to the proprietor of the Quarterly Review. So far as it was a burlesque on the Lay of the Last Minstrel, I know it was ; yet was he, as a publisher, so anxious to get it, that he engaged Lord Byron to use his utmost influence with me to obtain it for him, and his Lordship wrote me a most pressing letter upon the occasion. He asked me to let Mr. Murray (who was in despair about it) have the publication of this poem, as the greatest possible favour.

The following was my answer, dated Worton-House, December 19th, 1813 :—

“ I would not hesitate a moment to lay aside the kind of resentment I feel against Mr. Murray, for the pleasure of complying with the desire you so strongly express, if

it were in my power;—but judge of the impracticability, when I assure you that a considerable portion of the poem is in the printer's hands, and that the publication will soon make its appearance. It has indeed been *morally* impossible for me to do it for some time. I think I need not protest very eagerly to be believed, when I say that I should be happy to do what you could esteem a favour. I wish for no triumph over Murray.—The post of this morning brought me a letter from him.—I shall probably answer it at my leisure some way or other.—I wish you a good night, and ever am,

“ My dear Lord,” &c.

In less than a fortnight, the current of satisfaction which had run thus high and thus strong in favour of his publisher, ebbed with equal rapidity; and became so low, that in addition to the loss of

this coveted American poem, the publication of his Lordship's future works had nearly gone into a different channel. On the 28th of December, I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing "The Corsair." He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations, he said, "I have a great mind—I will." He then added, that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared he never would take money for them; and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void, when the question was about thousands instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable author of Waverly, that "the wise and good accept not gifts which are made

in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of*." I felt this on the sale of Childe Harold, and observed it to him. The copyright of the Giaour and the Bride of Abydos remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly ; nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of the Corsair ; and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the poem complete on New Year's Day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of it gave him great pleasure ; and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased. Independent of the profit, I was highly delighted with

* *Monastery*, vol. iii. c. 7.

this confidential renewal of kindness, and he seemed pleased that I felt it so. I must, however, own, that I found kindness to me was not the sole motive of the gift. I asked him if he wished me to publish it through his publisher.—“Not at all,” said he, “do exactly as you please; he has had the assurance to give me his advice as to writing, and to tell me that I should outwrite myself. I would rather you would publish it by some other bookseller.”

The circumstance, however, lowered the pride of wealth; a submissive letter was written, containing some flattery, and, in spite of an awkward apology, Lord Byron was appeased. He requested me to let the publisher of the former poems have the copyright, to which I of course agreed.

While the *Corsair* was in the press Lord Byron dedicated it to Mr. Moore, and at the end of the poem he added, “Stanzas

on a Lady weeping." These were printed without my knowledge. They no sooner appeared, acknowledged by his name in the title page, than he was violently assailed in the leading newspapers, in verse and in prose: his life, his sentiments, his works. The suppressed Satire, with the names of his new friends at length, was re-printed, in great portions, in the Courier, Post, and other papers. Among other things, an attempt was made to mortify him, by assertions of his receiving large sums of money for his writings. He was extremely galled—and indeed the daily-continued attempts to overwhelm him were enough to gall him. There was no cessation of the fire opened upon him. I was exceedingly hurt, but he had brought it upon himself, after having by his genius conquered all his enemies. He did not relish the *ecraser* system, when it was turned upon himself; and he derived no aid from those who had got him into the

scrape. In the goading it occasioned he wrote to me.

His feelings upon this subject were clearly manifested, but he expressed himself in the kindest manner towards me; and though Mr. Murray was going to contradict the statement made in the Courier and other papers, he desired that my name should not be mentioned. Immediately on receiving Lord Byron's letter, I sat down to write one to be published in the morning-papers, and while I was writing it, I received another note from him. It had been determined that Mr. Murray should say nothing upon the subject, and Lord Byron determined to take no notice of it himself. He therefore wished me not to involve myself in the squabble by any public statement.

In the first of these letters it was very evident that Lord Byron wished me to interfere, though he was too delicate to ask it; and in the second letter, nothing can

be clearer than that he was hurt at the determination which had been taken, that his publisher should say nothing. I therefore resolved to publish the letter I had written, but, at the same time, to have his concurrence; in consequence I took it to town and read it to him. He was greatly pleased, but urged me to do nothing disagreeable to my feelings. I assured him that it was, on the contrary, extremely agreeable to them, and I immediately carried it to the proprietor of the Morning Post, with whom I was acquainted. I sent copies to the Morning Chronicle and other papers, and I had the satisfaction of finding the persecution discontinued. The following is the letter :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

SIR,

I have seen the paragraph in an evening paper, in which Lord Byron is *accused* of “ re-

ceiving and pocketing" large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind, but the assertion being public, I think it a justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity, at this moment, to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his Lordship.

I take upon me to affirm that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge the profits of the *Satire* were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* I have already publicly acknowledged, in the Dedication of the new edition of my novels ; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of the *Corsair*, not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it, while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, the *Giaour* and the *Bride of Abydos*, Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest

that no part of the sale of those has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise, that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this ; - for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed in beneficent purposes. I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject as well as some others ; and he has constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his productions.

The pen in my hand, and affection and grateful feelings in my heart, I cannot refrain from touching upon a subject of a painful nature, delicate as it is, and fearful as I am that I shall be unable to manage it with a propriety of which it is susceptible, but of which the execution is not easy. One reflection encourages me, for if magnanimity be the attendant of rank, (and all that I have published proves such a prepossession in my mind,) then have I the less to fear from *the most illustrious,*

in undertaking to throw, into its proper point of view, a circumstance which has been completely misrepresented or misunderstood.

I do not purpose to defend the publication of the two stanzas at the end of the *Corsair*, which has given rise to such a torrent of abuse, and of the insertion of which I was not aware till the Poem was published; but most surely they have been placed in a light which never entered the mind of the author, and in which men of dispassionate minds cannot see them. It is absurd to talk seriously of their ever being meant to disunite the parent and the child, or to libel the sovereign. It is very easy to descant upon such assumed enormities; but the assumption of them, if not a loyal error, is an atrocious crime. Lord Byron never contemplated the horrors that have been attributed to him. The lines alluded to were an impromptu, upon a single well-known fact; I mean the failure in the endeavour to form an administration in the year 1812, according to the wishes of the author's friends; on which it was reported that tears were shed by an illustrious female. The very words in the context show the verses to be confined

to that one circumstance, for they are in the singular number, *disgrace, fault*. What disgrace?—What fault? Those (says the verse) of not saving a sinking realm (and let the date be remembered, March, 1812), by taking the writer's friends to support it. Never was there a more simple political sentiment expressed in rhyme. If this be libel, if this be the undermining of filial affection, where shall we find a term for the language often heard in both houses of Parliament?

While I hope that I have said enough to show the hasty misrepresentation of the lines in question, I must take care not to be misunderstood myself. The little part I take in conversing on politics is well known, among my friends, to differ completely from the political sentiments which dictated these verses; but knowing their author better than most who pretend to judge of him, and with motives of affection, veneration, and admiration, I am shocked to think that the hasty collecting of a few scattered poems, to be placed at the end of a volume, should have raised such a clamour.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

R. C. DALLAS.

I was delighted, and Lord Byron was pleased with the effect of my public letter. I passed a very pleasant morning with him a day or two after it appeared, and he read me several letters he had received upon it.

The *Corsair* had an immediate and rapid sale. As soon as it was printed, the publisher sent it to a gentleman of fortune and of talent, who supported his Review; informing him, at the same time, that he had sold several thousand copies of the Poem on the first day.

In the original manuscript of the *Corsair*, the chief female character was called Francesca, in whose person he meant to delineate one of his acquaintance; but, before the Poem went to the press, he changed the name to *Medora*.

Through the winter, and during the spring of 1814, he maintained an open and friendly intercourse with me. I saw him very frequently.

In May he began his Poem of *Lara*; on the 19th I called upon him, when he read the beginning of it to me. I immediately said that it was a continuation of the *Corsair*.

He was now so frank and kind that I again ventured to talk to him of Newstead Abbey, which brought to his mind his promise of the pledge; and, on June 10, 1814, after reading the continuation of *Lara*, he renewed the resolution of never parting with the Abbey. In confirmation of this he gave me all the letters he had written to his mother, from the time of his forming the resolution to go abroad till his return to England in July, 1811. The one he originally meant as a pledge for the preservation of Newstead, is that of the 6th March, 1809. In giving them to me, he said, they might one day be looked upon as curiosities, and that they were mine to do as I pleased with.

I remained of opinion that Lara was the Corsair disguised, or, rather, that Conrad was Lara returned, after having embraced the life of a Corsair in consequence of his crime. He had not determined the catastrophe when I left him—I wrote and urged it. This was my letter on the subject:—

“ The beauties of your new Poem equal, some of them perhaps excel, what we have enjoyed in your preceding tales. With respect to the narrative, the interest, as far as you have read, is completely sustained. Yet, to render *Lara* ultimately as interesting as *Conrad*, he ought, I think, to be developed of his mystery in the conclusion of the Poem. Sequels to tales have seldom been favourites, and I see you are disposed to avoid one in *Lara*, but such a sequel as you would make, with what you have begun, could not fail of success. Slay him in your proposed battle, and let *Calad's*

lamentation over his body discover in him the Corsair, and in his page the wretched Gulnare. For all *this gloom* pray give us after this a happy tale.”

He chose to leave it to the reader’s determination ; but, I think, it is easy to be traced in the scene under the line where Lara, mortally wounded, is attended by Kaled :—

“ His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.
They spoke of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reached alone ;
And, he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round :
They seemed e’en then—that twain—unto the last
To half forget the present in the past ;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.”

CANTO II. Stanz. 18

In the next stanza, also, he speaks of remembered scenes. In the 21st stanza the sex of Kaled is revealed.—In the 22d the reader is led to conclude that Kaled was Gulnare—though

“ — that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold.”

Lara was finished on the 24th of June, 1814. He read it over to me, and while I was with him that day he made me a present of four proof prints taken from Westall's picture of him. He also gave me the small engraving which was taken from the portrait painted by Phillips. These portraits combine all that depends upon the pencil to transmit of personal resemblance, and all of mind that it can catch for posterity or the stranger. The effect of utterance, and the living grace of motion, must still be left to the imagination of those who have not had opportunities of observing them;

but the power with which no pencil is endowed is displayed by the pen of Byron himself, and to this must these pictures be indebted for the completion of their effect. I have seen him again and again in both the views given by the artists. That of Mr. Phillips is simply the portrait of a gentleman—it is very like ; but the sentiment which appears to me to predominate in it is haughtiness. If I judge aright, I am not the less of opinion, that there is no error attributable to the pencil by which the sentiment was marked. I have seen Lord Byron assume it on some occasions, and I have no doubt that the feeling which produced it was a fluctuation from his natural, easy, flexible look, to one of intended dignity. Whether there be more of dignity or of haughtiness in the countenance, as there expressed, I mean not to contend—it strikes me as I have mentioned. But it is Westall's picture that I contemplate at times with

calm delight, and at times with rapture. It is the picture of emanating genius, of Byron's genius—it needs not utterance, it possesses the living grace of thought, of intellect, of spirit, and is like a sun beaming its powerful rays to warm and vivify the imaginations and the hearts of mankind. From the free and unlimited egress he permitted me to his apartments, I saw him in every point of view. I have been with him when he was composing. Some of the additional stanzas of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, and many lines of the Corsair, and of Lara, were composed in my presence. At his chambers in the Albany, there was a long table covered with books standing before the fire-place : at the one end of it stood his own easy chair, and a small round table at his hand ; at the other end of the table was another easy chair, on which I have sat for hours reading, or contemplating him ; and I have seen him in the very position represented

in Mr. Westall's picture. I have already said that he gave me four of the earliest impressions of the print taken from it. It brings him completely to my mind. I have been in the habit of contemplating it with great affection, though sometimes mixed with a sorrow for those opinions on which I found it impossible to accord with him, and for those acts which incurred the disapprobation of the good and the wise ; but never did I look upon it with such sorrow as on the day I heard that he was no more.

I have little to add. Peace with France being concluded in the year 1814, I resolved on going to Paris, and thence to the South ; but as I did not immediately leave England, and Lord Byron returning to town, I had an opportunity of seeing him again. I sat some time with him on the 4th of October, and then took my leave of

him; and here I think our intercourse may be said to terminate. While I was at Bordeaux, his marriage took place. Napoleon's successful entry into Paris hurried me back to England; and on my arrival in London I saw both Lord and Lady Byron at their house in Piccadilly.

I think that for some years I possessed more of his affection than those who, after the establishment of his fame, were proud to call him friend. This opinion is formed, not only from the recollected pleasure I enjoyed, but from his own opinions in conversation, long after he had entered the vortex of gaiety and of flattery; and from what he read to me from a book in which he was in the habit of drawing characters;—a book that was not to be published till the living generation had passed away. That book suggested to me these pages: nor did I keep my intention a secret from him. In

the year 1819, I informed him that *my* posthumous volume was made up; and I said:—

“ I look into it occasionally with much pleasure, and I enjoy the thought of being in company with your spirit, when it is opened on earth towards the end of the nineteenth century, and of finding you pleased, even in the high sphere you may then, if you would but will it now, occupy—which it is possible you might not be, were you to see it opened by the world in your present sphere. I do not know whether you are able to say as much for your book; for if you do live hereafter, and I have not the slightest doubt but you will, I suspect that you will have company about you at the opening of it which may rather afford occasion of remorse than of pleasure, however gracious and forgiving you may find immortal spirits. Of you I have written

precisely as I think, and as I have found you ; and though I have inserted some things which I could not give to the present generation, the whole as it stands is a just portrait of you during the time you honoured me with your intimacy and friendship, (for I drop the pencil where the curtain dropped between us,) and the picture is to me an engaging one."

If his affection, his confidence, nay I will boldly say his preference, on difficult occasions, were but flattery or an illusion lasting for years, the remembrance of it is too agreeable to be parted with at the closing period of my life, especially as that remembrance is accompanied with a recollection of my anxiety, and of my efforts to exalt him as high in wisdom as nature and education had raised him on the standard of genius. But it was no illusion ; and at the very moment of his quit-

ting his country for ever, I received one more proof of his remembrance and of his confidence. I had returned to the Continent. Whatever was the cause of the breach between him and his lady, it appears to have been irreparable, and it attracted public notice and animadversion. All the odium fell on him, and his old enemies were glad of another opportunity of assailing him. Tale succeeded tale, and he was painted hideously in prose and verse, and tittle-tattle. Publicly and privately he was annoyed and goaded in such a manner, that he resolved to go abroad. On taking this resolution, he sent a note to my son, who was then in London, requesting to see him. He immediately waited upon him. Lord Byron said to him, he was afraid that I thought he had slighted me ; told him of his intention to go to Switzerland and Italy, and invited him to accompany him. This invitation doubly pleased

me : it showed that I still possessed a place in his memory and regard ; and I saw in it advantages for my son in travelling which he might not otherwise enjoy ; but, upon reflection, I was not sorry he did not avail himself of the opportunity, and that the proposal fell to the ground.

Lord Byron left England in the year 1816, and I trace him personally no farther. I continued to read his new poems with great pleasure, as they appeared, till he published the two first cantos of *Don Juan*, which I read with a sorrow that admiration could not compensate. His muse, his British muse, had disdained licentiousness and the pruriency of petty wits ; but with petty wits he had now begun to amalgamate his pure and lofty genius. Yet he did not long continue to alloy his golden ore with the filthy dross of impure metal : whatever errors he fell into, whatever sins lie at his door, he occasionally burst through

his impurities, as he proceeded in that wonderful and extraordinary medley, in which we at once feel the poet and see the man : no eulogy will reach his towering height in the former character ; no eulogy dictated by friendship and merited for claims which truth can avow, will, I fear, cover the—I have no word, I will use none—that has been fastened upon him in the latter. The fact is, that he was like most men, a mixed character ; and that, on either side, mediocrity was out of his nature. If his pen were sometimes virulent and impious, his heart was always benevolent, and his sentiments sometimes apparently pious. Nay, he would have been pious,—he would have been a christian, had he not fallen into the hands of atheists and scoffers.



There was something of a pride in him which carried him beyond the common

sphere of thought and feeling. And the excess of this characteristic pride bore away, like a whirlwind, even the justest feelings of our nature ; but it could not root them entirely from his heart. In vain did he defy his country and hold his countrymen in scorn ; the choice he made of the motto for Childe Harold evinces that patriotism had taken root in his mind. The visions of an Utopia in his untravelled fancy deprived reality of its charm ; but when he awakened to the state of the world, what said he ? “ I have seen the most celebrated countries in the world, and have learned to prefer and to love my own.” In vain too was he led into the defiance of the sacred writings ; there are passages in his letters and in his works which show that religion might have been in his soul. Could he cite the following lines and resist the force of them ? It is true that he marks them for the beauty of

the verse, but no less for the sublimity of the conceptions; and I cannot but hope that had he lived he would have proved another instance of genius bowing to the power of truth :

Dim as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars,
To lonely, wandering, weary travellers,
Is reason to the soul.—And as on high
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here ; so reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere ;
So pale grows reason at religion's sight,
So dies,—and so dissolves—in supernatural light.

DRYDEN—quoted in the *Liberal*.

When I planned this book, it was my intention to conclude it with remarks on the genius and writings of Lord Byron. Alas ! I have suffered time to make a progress unfriendly to the subject to which I had attached so great an interest. Had

Providence vouchsafed me the happiness of recording of him, from my own knowledge, the renovation of his mind and character, which has been an unvaried object of my prayers, my delight would have supplied me with energy and with spirits to continue my narrative and my observations. His genius and his writings have already been widely and multifariously examined and acknowledged, but they will no doubt be treated of in a concentered manner by an abler pen than mine ; and I therefore the more willingly relinquish this task. Of his course of life subsequent to his leaving England, I will not write upon hearsay. However he may have spent some portion of the time, the last part of it cannot but redound to his honour and his fame as a man ; and he seemed to me building in Greece a magnificent road for his return to his own country. Had he lived and succeeded, one single word of contrition

would have wiped away all offences; and the hearts and the arms of his countrymen would have opened to receive him on his arrival. They would have drawn him in a triumphal car from the coast to the metropolis.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

THIS work had proceeded thus far, when it pleased God to stop the pen of the writer, and bid to cease the current of recollections which had set it in motion. Mr. Dallas had been attacked, in the month of July *, with an inflammatory fever, for which copious bleeding was necessary : he recovered indeed from the immediate disease, but the debility occasioned by the remedy was too great for his constitution to overcome, and he gradually sank under its effects. On the 21st of October, 1824, he expired. On his death-bed, and with a near view of eternity before him, which

* See Preliminary Statement.

was brightened by the firm hope of its being passed in the presence of his reconciled Maker, he confided to the writer of the following pages the task of closing these Recollections, and imparted to him his feelings and opinions upon the matter which should compose this concluding chapter.

While executing this sacred commission, I intreat the reader to remember that it is not the same person who writes; and not only that the writer is different, but to call to mind that it is a son who takes up the mantle which a father has cast down in leaving this world. Whoever has perused the foregoing pages, cannot but feel that the author has borne a part in the circumstances which are related of so honourable a nature, that a son may be well authorised to speak in other terms than those which the person himself might use. And if, in any thing I may say, it should be

thought that I have overstepped the reasonable licence which may be granted to the feelings of so near and dear a connexion, I trust that whatever may be counted as excess, will be pardoned in consideration of the fresh and powerful impulse which cannot but be given by the sense of so recent an event.

The character of Lord Byron, as it stands depicted in the preceding pages, will appear in a different light from that in which the public have recently been led to regard it. Piquant anecdotes, and scandalous chronicles, may serve to amuse for a time the unthinking ; but their real tendency is to pander to the worst feelings of our nature, by dragging into light the corruptions which disgrace humanity. It is not difficult to form an estimate of what Lord Byron might have been, by attending to the causes which made him what he was.

To reason from hearsay, and form opinions upon the unauthenticated annals of common conversation, can never bring us to truth, nor give to our judgments sufficient certainty for practical purposes. It will therefore be useless to attempt to estimate Lord Byron's original character from the events commonly related of his early life; nor to take into consideration the defects of his education, and the misfortunes of his boyhood. We have no authorized data upon which to conduct such an inquiry. But the pages of *this* book do contain authorized data. They contain opinions, and feelings, and facts, established by his own hand, although circumstances withhold from the British public the original records. These data will show us what he was, immediately before and immediately after the public development of his poetical powers had thrown him into a vortex which

decided his character, whatever it might have been previously.

There might have been some difficulty in finding so reasonable a ground-work upon which to form an opinion of what he had continued to be in his subsequent progress through life; and the fairest inference would have been that which his own later productions afford, had not a work been published purporting to be the record of Conversations held with Lord Byron at Pisa, in the years 1821 and 1822. This book appeared on the very day on which my father's remains were consigned to the grave, and I cannot be too thankful that he was spared the pain which he would have felt in reading it.

The perusal of this book rewards the reader, as he was rewarded who opened Pandora's box. It fills the mind with an unvaried train of miserable reflections ; but there is one consolation at the end. As by

a mathematical axiom the lesser is contained in the greater, so the comparatively smaller crime of falsehood is necessarily within the capability of one so depraved as Lord Byron appears in this book ; and by the same argument, the man whose mind could be in such a state as to suppose that he was doing “the world” and “the memory of Lord Byron” a service, by thus laying bare the degradation to which a master-mind was reduced, must surely be unable to restrain the tendency to exaggeration which would heighten the incredibility of what is already beyond belief. This opinion concerning the reporter of Lord Byron’s conversations is in some degree confirmed, by the simplicity which he displays in stating, that when Lord Byron was applied to for some authentic particulars of his life, his lordship asked the reporter himself, “Why *he* did not write some, as he believed that *he knew more of*

*him than any one else?" This was after three or four months' acquaintance * !*

In my own case, after reading the book to which I allude, this solitary consolation on account of Lord Byron was accompanied by a feeling of great satisfaction on account of my father ; for, if its contents be not

* There are several things mentioned in this book of Conversations which prove, to say the least, that Lord Byron's memory was not correct, if what is reported of him be true. On one occasion his lordship is stated to have said that his mother's death was one of the reasons of his return from Turkey, and this is repeated more strongly in another place. His mother's death did not take place until several weeks after his arrival in London, and he had not the slightest expectation of it when it happened. Lord Byron is also stated to have said, that after an absence of *three* years, he returned to London, and that the second canto of Childe Harold was just then published. The fact is, that he was absent *two* years to a day, which he remarked himself in a very strong manner, returning in July, 1811, and that the first and second cantos of Childe Harold were published together eight months after, in March, 1812, in the manner related in these Recollections.

only the truth, but the whole truth, Lord Byron afforded the highest testimony of his respect for my father's character, which in his unhappy situation he could possibly upon give. In such company, and conversing such subjects, he forbore to mention his name, although referring to matters upon which, the reader will have seen, it would have been natural to have spoken of him. I am willing to attribute this silence to the circumstance that, in Lord Byron's mind, my father's name must have been connected with the remembrance of all he had done, and said, and written, to turn him into the better path; and his Lordship could not have borne to recal that train of thought, after he had decidedly chosen the worse. That my father's earnest exertions had been applied to this end, will sufficiently appear from the foregoing part of this work; and, perhaps, I shall be pardoned for inserting here the body of a letter

which he wrote to Lord Byron at a much later period, to prove that he still retained that object in view. The letter is that alluded to in the last chapter, when, stating that he informed Lord Byron of his intention to leave a posthumous account of him, he extracted a short passage from it. The whole letter, which might not so well have been made public by the writer himself, cannot be considered as improperly published by the present Editor.

It was dated the 10th of November, 1819, and after some introductory remarks upon the cessation of his correspondence with Lord Byron, it proceeds as follows :—

“ I am almost out of life, and I shall speak to you with the freedom of a spirit already arrived beyond the grave : what I now write you may suppose addressed to you in a dream, or by my ghost, which I believe will be greatly inclined to haunt

you, and render you even supernatural service.

“ I take it for granted, my Lord, that when you excluded me from your friendship, you also banished me from your thoughts, and forgot the occurrences of our intimacy. I will, therefore, bring one circumstance to your recollection, as it is introductory to the subject of this letter. One day when I called upon you at your apartments in the Albany, you took up a book in which you had been writing, and having read a few short passages, you said that you intended to fill it with the characters of those then around you, and with present anecdotes, to be published in the succeeding century, and not before ; and you enjoyed, by anticipation, the effect that would be produced on the fifth and sixth generations of those to whom you should give niches in your posthumous volume. I have often thought of this fancy of yours, and imagined the wits, the belles,

and the beaux, the dupes of our sex, and the artful and frail ones of the other, figuring at the beginning of the twentieth century in the costume of the early part of the nineteenth. I remember well that after one or two slight sketches you concluded with, ‘This morning Mr. Dallas was here, &c. &c.’ You went on no farther, but the smile with which you shut your book gave me to understand that the colours you had used for my portrait were not of a dismal hue, and I was inclined enough at the time to digest the flattery, as I was conscious that I deserved your kindness, and believed that you felt so too. But, however that may be, whether the words were a mere flattering impromptu or not, whatever character you may have doomed me to figure in, a hundred years hence, you certainly have not done me justice in this age: it will not, therefore, appear extraordinary if I should not have depended altogether for my character

on the smile with which you put your volume down.

“ Lest you should suspect some inconsistency in this, and that although I began by assuring you that I did not mean to complain, my letter has been imagined for no other purpose; I will pause here, to declare to you solemnly that the affection I have felt for you, that the affection I do feel for you, is the motive by which I am at present actuated; and that but for the desire I feel to be of some service to you, you never would have heard from me again while I remained in this life. Were not this the case, this letter would deserve to be considered as an impertinence, and I would scorn to write it. I would give the world to retrieve you; to place you again upon that summit which you reached, I may say on which you alighted, in the spring of 1812. It may be a more arduous attempt, but I see no impossibility; nay, to place you much higher than ever. You

are yet but little beyond the dawn of life—it is downright affectation ; it is, I was going to say, folly, to talk of grey hairs and age at twenty-nine. This is free language, my Lord, but not more than you formerly allowed me, and my increased age, and nearer view of eternity confirm the privilege. As a *Poet* you have indeed wonderfully filled up the years you have attained—as a man you are in your infancy. Like a child you fall and dirt yourself, and your last fall has soiled you more than all the rest. I would to heaven you had not written your last unaccountable work*, and which, did it not here and there bear internal incontestible evidence, I would suffer no man to call yours. Forgive my warmth—I would rather consider you as a child slipping into mire, that may be washed away, than as a man

Stept in so far, that should he wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

* The first Cantos of Don Juan.

Your absence, and the distance of your abode, leave your name at the mercy of every tatler and scribbler, who, even without being personal enemies, attack character for the mere pleasure of defamation, or for gain; and the life you are said to lead, and I grieve to say the work you have published, leave you no defenders. However you may stand with the world, I cannot but believe that at your age you may shake off all that clogs you in the career for which you were born. The very determination to resume it would be an irresistible claim to new attention from the world; and unshaken perseverance would effect all that you could wish. Imagination has had an ample range. No genius ever attained its meed so rapidly, or more completely; but manhood is the period for reality and action. Will you be content to throw it away for Italian skies and the reputation of eccentricity? May God grant me power to stir

up in your mind the resolution of living the next twenty years in England, engaged in those pursuits to which Providence seems more directly to call every man who by birth is entitled to take a share in the legislation of his country. But what do I say? I believe that I ought first to wish you to take a serious view of the subjects on which legislation turns. Much has been argued in favour of adopting and adhering to a party—I have never been convinced of this—but I am digressing. At all events, I beseech you to think of reinstating yourself in your own country. Preparatory to this, an idea has come into my mind, which it is time for me to state to you; to do which I must return to the seemingly querulous style from which I have digressed. Well then, my Lord, I did some time ago think of your treatment of me with pain; and reflection, without lessening my attachment, showed me that you had acted towards me

very ungenerously, and, indeed, very unjustly—you ought to have made more of me. I say this the more freely now because I have lived till it is become indifferent to me. It is true that I benefited not inconsiderably by some of your works; but it was not in the nature of money to satisfy or repay me. I felt the pecuniary benefit as I ought, and was not slow in acknowledging it as I ought. The six or seven hundred pounds paid by the purchaser of *Childe Harold* for the copyright was, in my mind, nothing in comparison with the honour that was due to me for discerning the genius that lay buried in the Pilgrimage, and for exciting you to the publication of it, in spite of the damp which had been thrown upon it in the course of its composition, and in spite of your own reluctance and almost determination to suppress it; nothing in comparison with the kindness that was due to me for the part I took in keeping back your

Hints from Horace, and the new edition of the *Satire*, till the moment I impressed conviction on your mind that your fame and the choice of your future career in life depended upon the suppression of these, and on the publication of *Childe Harold*. I made an effort to render you sensible that I was not dead to that better claim, but it was unsuccessful; and though you continued your personal kindness whenever we met, you raised in my mind a jealousy which I was perhaps too proud, if not too mean-spirited, to betray. The result of the feeling, however, was, that I borrowed from you the hint of a posthumous volume, for after awhile I did not much care for the present, and I have indulged meditations on you and on myself for the amusement and judgment of future generations, but with this advantage over you, that I am convinced that I shall participate in whatever effect they produce; and without this conviction

I cannot conceive how the slightest value can be attached to posthumous fame. This is a topic on which I feel an inclination to dwell, but I will conquer the impulse, for my letter is already advanced beyond the limits I proposed. My Lord, my posthumous volume is made up—I look into it occasionally with much pleasure, and I enjoy the thought of being, when it is opened, in the year 1900, in company with your spirit, and of finding you pleased, even in the high sphere you may, if you will, then occupy, which it is possible you would not be, were you to see it now opened to the public in your present sphere. I do not know, my Lord, whether you are able to say as much for your book, for if you do live hereafter, and I have not the slightest doubt but you will, I suspect that you will have company about you at the opening of it, which may rather afford occasion of remorse than of pleasure, however gra-

cious and forgiving you may find immortal spirits. Of you I have written precisely as I think, and as I have found you; and though I have inserted some things which I would not give to the present generation, the whole, as it stands, is a just portrait of you during the time I knew you; for I drop the pencil where you dropped the curtain between us, and the picture is to me an engaging one. I contemplate it together with some parts of your works, and I cannot help breaking forth into the exclamation of ‘And is this man to be lost?’ You, perhaps, echo, in a tone of displeasure, ‘Lost!—Yes, lost.—Nay, unclench your hand—remember it is my ghost that is addressing you; not the being of flesh and blood whom you may dash from you at your will, as you have done. The man whose place is in the highest council of the first nation in the world, who possesses powers to delight and to serve his

country, if he dissipates years between an Italian country-house and opera-box, and murders his genius in attempts to rival a Rochester or a Cleland,—for I will not, to flatter you, say a Boccacio or a LaFontaine, who wrote at periods when, and in countries where, indecency was wit—*that man is lost*. Gracious Heaven! on what lofty ground you stood in the month of March, 1812! The world was before you, not as it was to Adam, driven in tears from Paradise to seek a place of rest, but presenting an elysium, to every part of which its crowded and various inhabitants vied in their welcome of you. ‘Crowds of eminent persons,’ says my posthumous volume, ‘courted an introduction, and some volunteered their cards. This was the trying moment of virtue, and no wonder if that were shaken, for never was there so sudden a transition from neglect to courtship. Glory darted thick upon him from all sides; from the

Prince Regent, and his admirable daughter, to the bookseller and his shopman; from Walter Scott to —; from Jeffrey to the nameless critics of the *Satirist* and *Scourge*; he was the wonder of wits, and the show of fashion.' I will not pursue the reverse; but I must repeat, ' And is this man to be lost ?' My head is full of you, and whether you allow me the merit or not, my heart tells me that I was chiefly instrumental, by my conduct, in 1812, in saving you from perpetuating the enmity of the world, or rather in forcing you, against your will, into its admiration and love; and that I once afterwards considerably retarded your rapid retrograde motion from the envied station which genius merits, but which even genius cannot preserve without prudence. These recollections have actuated me, it may be imprudently, to write you this letter, to endeavour to impel you to reflect seriously upon what you ought to be, and to beseech

you to take steps to render your manhood solidly and lastingly glorious. Will you once more make use of me? I cannot believe that there is an insurmountable bar to your return to your proper station in life,—a station, which let me be bold enough to say, you have no right to quit. All that I have heard concerning you is but vague talk. The breach with Lady Byron was evidently the ground of your leaving England; and I presume the causes of that breach are what operate upon your spirit in keeping you abroad. In recollecting my principles, you will naturally imagine that the first thing that would occur to my mind in preparing the way for your return, is an endeavour to close that breach—but I am not sufficiently acquainted with her to judge of the force of her opposition. At any rate, I would make the blame rest at her door, if reconciliation is not obtainable; I would be morally right;

and this it is in your power to be, on whichever side the wrong at first lay, by a manly severity to yourself, and by declaring your resolution to forgive, and to banish from your thought for ever all that could interrupt a cordial reconciliation. This step, should it not produce a desirable effect on the mind of Lady Byron, would infallibly lead to the esteem of the world. Is it too much for me to hope that I might, by a letter to her, and by a public account of you, and of your intended pursuits in England, make such a general impression, as once more to fix the eyes of your country upon you with sentiments of new admiration and regard, and usher you again to a glory of a nature superior to all you ever enjoyed. It has, I own, again and again come into my mind, to model my intended posthumous work for present publication, so as to have that effect; could I but prevail upon you to follow it up by a return to

England, with a resolution to lead a philosophical life, and to turn the great powers of your mind to pursuits worthy of them: and, among those, to a candid search after that religious Truth which often, as imagination sobers, becomes more obvious to the ordinary vision of Reason. Once more, my dear Lord Byron, forgive, or, rather, let me say, reward, my warmth, by listening again to the affection which prompts me to express my desire of serving you. I do not expect the glory of making a religious convert of you. 'I have still a hope that you will yourself have that glory if your life be spared to the usual length—but my present anxiety is to see you restored to your station in this world, after trials that should induce you to look seriously into futurity.'

Such was the affectionate interest with which the author of this letter continued

to regard Lord Byron! But it was too late; he had hardened his heart, and blunted his perception of the real value of such a friend. This was the last communication that ever took place between them, although an accidental circumstance afforded the assurance that this letter had reached its destination.

To return to the original character of Lord Byron. Whoever has read these pages attentively, or has seen the original documents from whence they are drawn, cannot fail to have perceived, that in his Lordship's early character there were the seeds of all the evil which has blossomed and borne fruit with such luxuriance in his later years. Nor will it be attempted here, to shew that in any part of his life he was without those seeds; but I think that a candid observer will also be ready to acknowledge, after reading this work, that there was an opposing principle of

good acting in his mind, with a strength which produced opinions that were afterwards entirely altered. The coterie into which he unfortunately fell at Cambridge familiarized him with all the sceptical arguments of human pride. And his acquaintance with an unhappy atheist—who was suddenly summoned before his outraged Maker, while bathing in the streams of the Cam, was rendered a severe trial, by the brilliancy of the talent which he possessed, and which imparted a false splendour to the principles which he did not scruple to avow. Yet, when Lord Byron speaks of this man, as being an atheist, he considers it offensive;—when he remarks on the work of Mr. Townsend, who had attempted in the sketch of an intended poem to give an idea of the last judgment, he considered his idea as *too daring*;—in opening his heart to his mother he shows that he believed that *God knew, and did all things for the*

best;—after having seen mankind in many nations and characters, he unrestrainedly conveys his opinion, that human nature is every where corrupt and despicable. These points are the more valuable, because they flowed naturally and undesignedly from the heart; while, on the contrary, his sceptical opinions were expressed only when the subject was before him, and as it were by way of apology.

When, in this period of his life, there is any thing like argument upon this subject, advanced by him in his correspondence, it is miserably weak and confused. The death of his atheistical friend bewildered him: he thought there was the stamp of immortality in all this person said and did—that he seemed a man created to display what the Creator could make—and yet, such as he was, he had been gathered into corruption, before the maturity of a mind that might have been the pride of posterity.

And this bewildered him ! If his opinion of his friend were a just one, ought not this reasoning rather to have produced the conviction, that such a *mind* could not be gathered into the corruption which awaited the perishable body ? Accordingly, Lord Byron's inference did not lead him to produce this death as a support to the doctrine of annihilation ; but his mind being tinctured previously with that doctrine, he confesses that it bewildered him.

When about to publish *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, containing sceptical opinions, the *decided* expression of which he was then induced to withdraw, he wrote a note to accompany them, which has been inserted in this work. Its main object is to declare, that his was not sneering, but desponding scepticism—and he grounds his opinions upon the most unlogical deduction that could be formed : that, because he had found many people abuse and disgrace

the religion they professed, that therefore religion was not true. This is like saying, that because a gamester squanders his guineas for his own destruction, they are therefore not gold, nor applicable for good purposes. Weak as this was, he called it *an apology* for his scepticism.

It cannot be said, that up to this period, Lord Byron was decidedly an unbeliever ; but, on the contrary, I think it may be said, that there was a capability in his mind for the reception of Divine Truth,—that he had not closed his eyes to the light which therefore forced its way in with sufficient power to maintain some contest with the darkness of intellectual pride ; and this opinion is strengthened, by observing the effects of that lingering light, in the colouring which it gave to vice and virtue in his mind. His conduct had been immoral and dissipated ; but he knew it to be such, and acknowledged it in its true colours. He

regretted the indulgence of his passions as producing criminal acts, and bringing him under their government. He expressed these feelings ;—he did more, he strove against them. He scrupled not publicly to declare his detestation of the immorality which renders the pages of Mr. Moore inadmissible into decent society ; and he severely satirizes the luxurious excitements to vice which abound in our theatrical importation of Italian manners*. When a circumstance occurred in which one of his tenants had given way to his passions, Lord Byron's opinion and decision upon the subject were strongly expressed, and his remarks upon that occasion are particularly worthy of notice. He thought our first

* Then let Ausonia, skilled in every art
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town,
To sanction vice, and hunt decorum down.

duty was not to do evil, though he felt that was impossible. The next duty was to repair the evil we have done, if in our power. He would not afford his tenants a privilege he did not allow himself.—He knew he had been guilty of many excesses, but had laid down a resolution to reform, and latterly kept it.

I mention these circumstances to call to the reader's mind the general tenor of Lord Byron's estimate of moral conduct, as it appears in the present work; because I think it may be said that he had a lively perception of what was right, and a strong desire to follow it; but he wanted the regulating influence of an acknowledged standard of sufficient purity, and, at the same time, established by sufficient authority in his mind. The patience of God not only offered him such a standard in religion, but kept his heart in a state of capability for receiving it. In spite of his many

griefings of God's spirit, still, it would not absolutely desert him as long as he allowed a struggle to continue in his heart.

But the publication of *Childe Harold* was followed by consequences which seemed to have closed his heart against the long-tarrying spirit of God, and at once to have ended all struggle. Never was there a more sudden transition from the doubtings of a mind to which Divine light was yet accessible, to the unhesitating abandonment to the blindness of vice. Lord Byron's vanity became the ruling passion of his mind. He made himself his own god; and no eastern idol ever received more abject or degrading worship from a bigotted votary.

The circumstances which have been detailed in this work respecting the publication of *Childe Harold*, prove sufficiently how decided and how lamentable a turn they gave to a character, which, though

wavering and inconsistent for want of the guide I have referred to, had not yet passed all the avenues which might take him from the broad way that leadeth to destruction, into the narrow path of life. But Lord Byron's unresisting surrender to the first temptation of intrigue, from which all its accompanying horrors could not affright him, seems to have banished for ever from his heart the Divine influence which could alone defend him against the strength of his passions and the weakness of his nature to resist them ; and it is truly astonishing to find the very great rapidity with which he was involved in all the trammels of fashionable vice.

With proportionable celerity his opinions of moral conduct were changed ; his power of estimating virtue at any thing like its true value ceased ; and his mind became spiritually darkened to a degree as great perhaps as has ever been known to take

place from the results of one step. Witness the course of his life at this time, as detailed in the conversations lately published, to which I have before alluded. Witness the fact of his being capable of detailing such a course of life in familiar conversation to one almost a stranger.

What must have been the change in that man who could at one time write these lines,—

Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust ;
Pure is the flame that o'er her altar burns,
From grosser incense with disgust she turns ;
Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee mend thy line, and sin no more—

and at another become the author of *Don Juan*, where grosser, more licentious, more degrading images are produced, than could have been expected to have found their way into any mind desirous merely of preserving a decent character in society ;—than

could have been looked for from any tongue not habituated to the conversation of the most abandoned of the lowest order of society? What must have been the change in him who, from animadverting severely upon the licentiousness of a village intrigue, could glory in the complication of crimes which give zest to fashionable adultery; and even in the excess of his glorying could forego his title to be called a *man of honour* or a *gentleman*, for which the merest coxcomb of the world will commonly restrain himself within some bounds after he has overstepped the narrower limits of religious restraint! For who can venture to call Lord Byron either one or the other after reading the unrestrained *disclosures* he is said, in his published Conversations, to have made, "without any injunctions to secrecy." Who could have imagined that the same man who had observed upon the offensiveness of the expression of another's irreligious

principles, should ever be capable of offending the world with such awfully fearless impiety as is contained in the latter Cantos of *Don Juan*, and boldly advanced in *Cain*? Who can read, in his own handwriting, the opinion that a sublime and well intentioned anticipation of the Last Judgment is too daring, and puts him in mind of the line—

“ And fools rush in where Angels fear to tread,”

and conceive that the same hand wrote his *Vision of Judgment*?

Yet such a change did take place, as any one may be convinced of, who will take the trouble to read the present work, and the Conversations to which I have alluded, and compare them together. For, let it be observed, that the few pages in the latter publication which refer to Lord Byron's religious opinions, state only his old weak reasoning, founded upon the disunion of

professing christians, some faint, and, I may say, childish wishes; and a *disowning* of the principles of Mr. Shelley's school. So also that solitary reference to a preparation for death, when death stood visibly by his bed-side ready to receive him, which is related by his servant,* and upon which I have known a charitable hope to be hung, amounts to just as much—*an assertion*. It can only be the most puerile ignorance of the nature of religion, which can receive assertion for proof in such a matter. The very essence of real religion is to let itself be seen in the life, when it is really sown in the heart; and a man who appeals to his assertions to establish his religious character, may be his own dupe, but can never dupe any but such as are like him—just as the lunatic in Bedlam may call himself a king,

* Lord Byron is stated to have said to his servant, "I am not afraid of dying—I am more fit to die than people think."

and believe it; but it is only those who are as mad as himself who will think themselves his subjects. There is no possibility of hermetically sealing up religion in the heart; if it be there it cannot be confined,—it must extend its influence over the principle of thought, of word, and of action.

When we see wonderful and rapid changes take place in the physical world, we naturally seek for the cause; and it cannot but be useful to trace the cause of so visible a change in the moral world, as that which appears upon the comparison I have pointed out. It will not, I think, be too much to say, that it took place immediately that the resistance against evil ceased in Lord Byron's mind. Temptation certainly came upon him in an overpowering manner; and the very first temptation was perhaps the worst, yet he yielded to it almost immediately. I refer to the circum-

stance recorded in these pages, which took place little more than a week after the first appearance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, when he received an extraordinary anonymous letter, which led immediately to the most disgraceful *liaison* of which he has not scrupled to boast. There was something so disgusting in the forwardness of the person who wrote, as well as deterring in the enormity of the criminal excesses of which this letter was the beginning, that he should have been roused against such a temptation at the first glance. But the sudden gust of public applause had just blown upon him, and having raised him in its whirlwind above the earth, he had already began to deify himself in his own imagination ; and this incense came to him as the first offered upon his altar. He was intoxicated with its fumes ; and, closing his mind against the light that had so long

crept in at crevices, and endeavoured to shine through every transparent part, he called the darkness light, and the bitter sweet, and said Peace when there was no Peace.

As long as Lord Byron continued to resist his temptations to evil, and to refrain from exposing publicly his tendency to infidelity, so long he valued the friendship of the author of the foregoing chapters, who failed not to seize every opportunity of supporting the struggle within him, in the earnest hope that the good might ultimately be successful. The contents of this book may give some idea of the nature and constancy of that friendship, and cannot fail of being highly honourable to its author, as well as of reflecting credit on Lord Byron, who, on so many occasions, gave way to its influence. But it is a strong proof of the short-sightedness of man's

judgment, that upon the most remarkable occasion on which this influence was excited, by inducing him to publish Childe Harold instead of the Hints from Horace, though the best intentions guided the opinion, it was made the step by which Lord Byron was lost ; and he who, in a literary point of view, had justly prided himself upon having withheld so extraordinary a mind from encumbering its future efforts with the dead weight of a work which might have altogether prevented its subsequent buoyancy, and who was alive to the glory of having discerned the neglected merit of the real poem, and of having spread out the wings which took such an eagle flight—having lived to see the rebellious presumption which that towering flight occasioned, and to anticipate the destruction that must follow the audacity, died deeply regretting that he had, even though unconsciously,

ever borne such a part in producing so lamentable a loss. One of the last charges which he gave me upon his death-bed, but a few days before he died, and with the full anticipation of his end, was, not to let this work go forth into the world without stating his sincere feeling of sorrow that ever he had been instrumental in bringing forward *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* to the public, since the publication of it had produced such disastrous effects to one whom he had loved so affectionately, and from whom he had hoped so much good—effects which the literary satisfaction the poem may afford to all the men of taste in the present and future generations, can never, in the slightest degree, compensate.

In obeying this solemn charge I should have concluded these remarks, had I not found, in looking over the manuscript of the work upon this subject, which was

first intended to have been left to posterity as a posthumous offering, and which was written about the year 1819, a passage which appears to me to form a fitter conclusion to this Chapter, and which, therefore, I copy from the author's writing :—

“I have suffered Time to make a progress unfriendly to the subject to which I had attached so great an interest. Had Providence vouchsafed me the happiness of recording of Lord Byron, from my own knowledge, the renovation of his mind and character, which was the object of my last letter to him, my delight would have supplied me with energy and spirits to continue my narrative, and my observations. Of his course of life subsequent I will not write upon hearsay; but I cannot refrain from expressing my grief, disappointment, and wonder, at the direction which was given

to it by the impulse of his brilliant success as a Poet. It seemed not only to confirm him in his infidelity, but to set him loose from social ties, and render him indifferent to every other praise than that of poetical genius. I am not singular in the cooling of his friendship, if it be not derogatory to call by that name any transient feeling he may have expressed ; and his intended posthumous volume will, probably, shew this, if he has not, in consequence of what I said to him in my last letter, altered or abandoned it. In the dedications of his poems there is no sincerity ; he had neither respect nor regard for the persons to whom they are addressed ; and Lord Holland, Rogers, Davies, and Hobhouse, if earthly knowledge becomes intuitive on retrospection, will see on what grounds I say this, and nod the recognition, and I trust forgiveness of heavenly spirits, if heavenly

their's become, to the wondering Poet with whose works their names are swimming down the stream of Time. He and they shall have *my* nod too on the occasion, if, let me humbly add, my prayers shall have availed me beyond the grave."

THE END.

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